Thursday, April 9, 2026 No 98 ₹7

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DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Titans edge Capitals in last-ball thriller

Gujarat survive Rahul, Miller scare to win by one run

Page 16

Adani wins US court hearing in SEC fraud suit

Page 13

PRM/KA/RERA/1250/303/PR/170905/000071

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Bengaluru Thursday, April 9, 2026 Pages 18 Vol 79 No 98 ₹7

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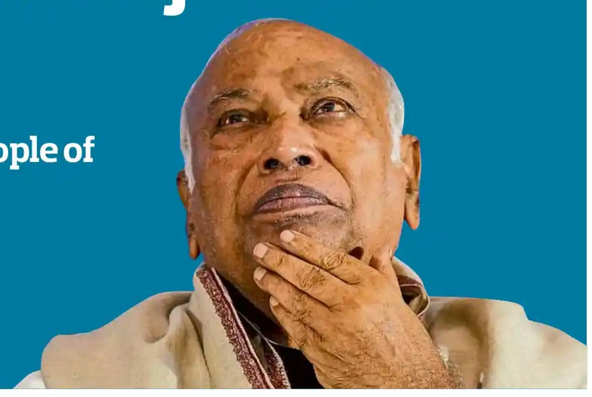
The Power of Good

Kharge expresses 'sincere regret' for remark on Gujaratis

Says it was never his intention to hurt sentiments of the people of Gujarat

Page 10



Nation

India withdraws bid to host UN climate summit in 2028

P.10

World

'Ketamine Queen' jailed for 15 years over Matthew Perry drugs

P.12

Nation

'Reconsider adultery and same-sex verdicts' P.11

Nation

Renewable energy: India in 3rd position P.10

Vance to head to Pak as fragile truce takes effect

VAGUE DEAL: Attacks on Iran, Gulf, Lebanon continue

TEHRAN/DUBAI/ WASHINGTON, AGENCIES

Iran, the United States and Israel agreed to a two-week ceasefire in an 11th-hour deal that headed off US President Donald Trump's threat to unleash a bombing campaign to destroy Iranian civilisation.

Trump is dispatching his Iran negotiating team, led by Vice President JD Vance, to Pakistan, the White House said on Wednesday, adding that the first round of talks would take place on Saturday.

US special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner will also be part of the team, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters.

Earlier in the day, despite the announcement of a ceasefire, Iran and Gulf Arab countries reported new attacks.

It was not clear if the strikes would scuttle the deal, which Vance called "fragile".

Even before the new attacks, much about the agreement was unclear as the sides presented vastly different visions of the terms.

Iran said the deal would allow it to formalise its new practice of charging ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz. But the details were not clear, nor was it known whether vessels would feel safe using the channel or whether ship traffic had resumed. It also was unclear whether any other country agreed to this condition.

Pakistan, which helped to mediate the deal, and others said fighting would pause in Lebanon, where Israel has launched a ground invasion against the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group. Israel said it would not, and strikes hit Beirut on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Trump said the Israel-Hezbollah conflict is not covered by the temporary ceasefire deal. "They were not included in the deal," the US president was quoted as saying by US public broadcaster PBS.

Israel backed the US ceasefire with Iran, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the deal does not cover fighting against Hezbollah.

Hezbollah has not confirmed if it will abide by the ceasefire.

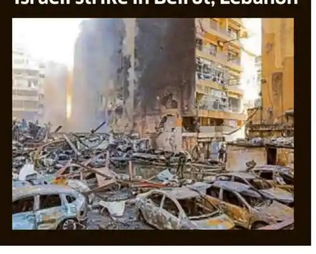
▸ Ceasefire, Page 6

Iranian women wave national flags as people gather in Tehran's Revolution Square after the US and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire. AFP

AFTER CEASEFIRE

- Oil prices fall by more than **15%,** slide below **$100 per barrel**
- **US military** says prepared to resume attacks on Iran
- **UAE** says 17 Iranian missiles and 35 drones targeted its territory
- **Kuwait** says 28 Iranian drones damage power and desalination plants as well as oil facilities
- Israel's Opposition criticises ceasefires, accuses **Netanyahu** of failing to achieve war objectives
- **UAE** says Iran should **pay** for damage caused by it, seeks clarification on how truce will ensure Tehran ceases hostilities

Damaged vehicles after an Israeli strike in Beirut, Lebanon



Trump announces 50% tariffs on nations supplying arms to Iran

WASHINGTON, REUTERS: US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that imports from countries supplying Iran with military weapons will face immediate 50% tariffs with no exemptions.

Trump did not specify which legal authority he would invoke to impose such tariffs, as the Supreme Court struck down his use of an emergency law to impose global tariffs.

"A Country supplying Military Weapons to Iran will be immediately tariffed, on any and all goods sold to the United States of America, 50%, effective immediately, There will be no exclusions or exemptions!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

He did not name any countries that could face the tariffs. China and Russia have helped Iran build military capacity to counter the US and Israel.

Rs 16.25L cr: Investors' wealth surges as stock markets celebrate US-Iran ceasefire

52 paise: Rupee surges on ceasefire, settles at $92.54

$85: RBI's expectation of average price of crude oil per barrel in FY27

Page 13

86 taluks contaminated, B'luru still over-exploited: Groundwater report

State sees overall dip in groundwater extraction

BENGALURU, DHNS

While Karnataka has seen an overall decline in groundwater extraction, the entire Bengaluru area remains 'over-exploited', and sub-surface water in 86 taluks is contaminated, a government report released Wednesday said.

Overall, groundwater extraction has reduced from 68.44% in 2024 to 66.49%, the Dynamic Ground Water Resources of Karnataka 2025 report said.

The annual groundwater recharge capacity has marginally risen from 18.74 billion cubic metres (BCM) in 2024 to 19.28 BCM in 2025. Also, annual extractable groundwater resources rose from 16.88 BCM to 17.41 BCM.

"These gains are the result of good rainfall, focused policy interventions and large-scale water conservation initiatives," Minor Irrigation Minister NS Boseraju said after releasing the report. However, all taluks in Bengaluru Urban district remain in the 'over-exploited' category.

The groundwater status in 11 taluks — Athani (Belagavi), Channapatna (Bengaluru South), Chamarajanagar, Molkalmur (Chitradurga), Davangere, Ron (Gadag), Channarayapatna (Hassan), Ranebennur, Savanur, Shiggaon (all Haveri) and Afzalpur (Kalaburagi) — has improved.

▸ Groundwater, Page 5

STATUS OF GROUNDWATER

145 Taluks	36 Taluks	11 Taluks	45 Taluks
Safe	Semi-Critical	Critical	Over-Exploited

GROUNDWATER EXTRACTION (Hectare-metres)

Irrigation	Industry	Domestic
10,16,209	20,681.55	1,21,023.10

EXTRACTION EXTREMES

Highest 378.85% — Bengaluru East

Lowest 5.91% — Madikeri

Net groundwater available for future - 7,31,899.9 hectare metres

RBI keeps repo rate unchanged at 5.25%

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday decided to keep key policy interest rates unchanged with a neutral stance, giving indication about flexibility on future monetary policy amid continued uncertainty over the West Asia conflict.

Repo rate, the interest at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks for their short-term needs, stands unchanged at 5.25%. The Monetary Policy Committee unanimously took the decision to maintain the status quo on key rates. The MPC also decided to continue with the neutral stance. This means the rates can be increased or cut in the next policy review, in June.

Details on Page 13

Women's quota, LS seat hike: Union Cabinet clears Bill

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Union Cabinet is learnt to have cleared a Bill seeking to amend the Constitution for early implementation of 33% quota for women in the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies and increasing the number of seats in the Lower House.

The Bill is scheduled to come up for discussion and passage when Parliament's Budget Session reconvenes on April 16. It is to be seen how the Opposition will respond to the proposal to increase the Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 816 and earmark 273 seats for women.

Along with the Constitution amendment Bill, another one seeking to amend the Delimitation Act will also be tabled.

Hasty move?

- Women's quota Bill passed in 2023 needs delimitation based on new Census
- New Census data won't be ready before 2029 and hence, quota can't be implemented in 2029 LS polls
- Government plans implementation based on 2011 Census
- Oppn believes govt's move is avoid quota-within-quota demand as 2027 Census will count castes

Sources said the meeting of the Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi cleared the amendments to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, commonly known as the Women's Reservation Act.

The women's quota Bill passed in 2023 had prescribed its implementation after the delimitation of seats following a new Census, but a proposal recently shared by the government with the Opposition said a delimitation could be undertaken based on the Census 2011.

The existing women's quota law does not allow for its implementation in the 2029 LS polls, as the Census 2027 data could be made available only later and a Delimitation Commission could complete its job only after 2029.

The Congress has already made its objections, claiming the 50% hike of seats across states would be detrimental to the interests of south India as well as states like Punjab and Haryana.

▸ Cabinet, Page 4

'SC has right to decide what is superstition'

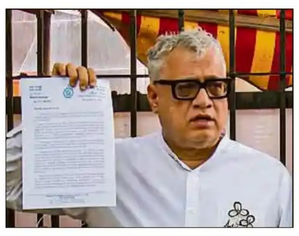
ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it has the right and jurisdiction to decide what is a superstitious practice in a religion even as the Union government contended that a secular court cannot adjudicate on the issue.

A nine-judge Constitution bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant was hearing arguments on petitions related to alleged discrimination against women at religious places, including Kerala's Sabarimala temple, and on the ambit and scope of religious freedom practised by multiple faiths.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union government, contended that a secular court cannot decide whether a religious practice is a superstition as judges are experts in the field of law, not religion.

▸ Supreme Court, Page 4



Derek O'Brien addresses the media after a meeting with the EC. PTI

EC vs TMC: CEC said 'get lost', MP accused of 'shouting'

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Trinamool Congress had an acrimonious meeting with the Election Commission on Wednesday, with the party claiming that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar told them to "get lost" when they raised issues. The poll body, however, accused Derek O'Brien of "shouting."

A four-member TMC delegation — Derek O'Brien, Sagarika Ghose, Menaka Guruswamy and Saket Gokhale — went to the Election Commission to raise the issue of the Bengal CEO and others being accompanied by BJP-affiliated functionaries on official visits, among other things, sources said.

After the meeting, O'Brien told reporters, "I want to tell you what the CEC told our delegation. Within 7 minutes of the meeting, he told us to 'get lost'. We are the second-largest opposition party in the Parliament, yet this is the conduct we are met with."

▸ EC vs TMC, Page 6

Assam, Kerala & Puducherry to vote today, P7

PROFESSIONAL 'MOVE'

GBA plans premium centres: Pay for faster services

DH SPECIAL

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

For decades, Bengalureans have faced a familiar ordeal: To get a birth certificate, khata, trade license or building plan approval, they have either spent weeks navigating the maze of corporation offices or quietly paid a broker to get the work done. Harassment, unwelcoming government staff and unexplained rejections were common.

Now, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) is trying to break that cycle with an unusual proposition: Pay a modest, clearly stated fee to a professionally managed centre where citizens can avail as many as 27 services — all under one roof — without waiting in long queues. The new initiative is modelled on the lines of a Passport Seva Kendra. The GBA plans to establish 10 such facilities across Bengaluru, with the five municipal corporations getting two each.

What makes the new facility different from the existing 'Bangalore One' centres is that the latter doesn't offer these many services under one roof. Moreover, the GBA will deploy its officials at these centres so that the files are cleared there itself, without being sent to corporation offices.

The fee will be above what the civic body officially charges for the same service but would be well below the informal "market rate" that the middlemen have long extracted from desperate citizens.

▸ GBA, Page 6

"The entire processing of an application will be done under one roof. We will deploy our officers in each of these centres. No file will come out of it and so there is no delay.

Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Revenue), GBA

SERVICES UNDER ONE ROOF

- Issuance of final e-khata for existing draft e-khata
- B to A khata conversion
- New khata for individual property (flat or plot)
- New A-khata for individual vacant plot along with single plot approval
- Bulk new khata for layout
- New bulk khata for multi-storey flats/units by developers
- e-khata amalgamation
- e-khata subdivision
- Khata mutation
- Birth certificate
- Death certificate
- Mobile telecom towers
- Tree cutting/felling
- Property tax
- Trade license
- Advertisement license
- Road cutting charges
- Approval of development plan
- Approval of layout
- Location certificate
- Approval of other property services
- Change of land use
- Land use assignment as per sec 69 of KTCP Act
- Sensitive clearance
- Any other service with requirement for field verification

Quickly

Mercury rises in Bengaluru, rain likely from April 11

The mercury surged sharply in Bengaluru on Wednesday, rising more than 2°C above normal at the city's base weather station. However, relief may be around the corner, with the weatherman forecasting rainfall from April 11 onwards.

Details on Page 3

Girl from Kerala goes missing

A 16-year-old girl from Kerala, who was on a group tour, has gone missing in the Chandradrona hill ranges in Chikkamagaluru district. A large-scale search operation has been launched, police said.

Details on Page 4

Three from B'luru drown in Vijayapura's Bhutnal lake

Three tourists from Bengaluru, including a 12-year-old boy, drowned in the historic Bhutnal lake near Vijayapura on Wednesday. The police have identified the deceased as Mohammad Hayat (12), Hyder Pasha (32) and Abdul Khuddus (35).

Details on Page 4

Khandre seeks discussion on wildlife birth control

The rising incidents of human-wildlife conflict have necessitated a discussion on animal birth control, Karnataka Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre said on Wednesday.

Details on Page 6

Government of Bharat

Committed to Nari Shakti Vandan

#NariShaktiVandan

CBC 22201/13/0005/2627

33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, ensuring participation in nation-building

Permanent Commission for women in the Armed Forces

Atleast 1 Woman Director in 48% of the total recognized startups in India

KSRTC relief fund an independent statutory contract, says HC

BENGALURU, DHNS: The High Court of Karnataka has ruled that the amount paid from the relief fund created by the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) is independent of the compensation awarded by the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) and cannot be deducted from the claimants' entitlement.

Justice Vijayakumar A Patil made this observation while hearing a case involving a collision between two KSRTC buses.

He noted that the Re 1 paid by each passenger forms a contribution towards the premium for a fund created by the KSRTC to provide relief to accident victims.

The accident occurred on February 8, 2018, around 10.45 am, when two KSRTC buses collided head-on near Santhigiri Estate in Kodagarahalli village, Suntikoppa, on the Kushalnagar–Madikere main road (BM Road). Both drivers died in the accident, and Shanthi, a passenger, succumbed to her injuries the following day.

Shanthi's husband, Ramappa, and son Roopith approached the tribunal seeking compensation of Rs 11.5 lakh. They submitted that Shanthi, a coolie worker, was earning Rs 400 per day.

It was argued that the KSRTC, being a state-run entity and internal insurer, was solely responsible for paying compensation. Meanwhile, the KSRTC paid Rs 3 lakh, claiming it as interim compensation.

On November 30, 2019, the tribunal awarded Rs 3.4 lakh as compensation, calculating the deceased's notional income at Rs 7,000 per month for 2018. It directed the KSRTC to pay Rs 40,000 after deducting the Rs 3 lakh already paid as interim compensation.

However, Justice Patil clarified that there is a clear distinction between compensation paid by the KSRTC under a statutory contract and compensation awarded by the tribunal. He observed that when a passenger pays a statutory levy (Re 1 included in the ticket fare), it creates an independent statutory contract between the passenger and the state.

"The purchase of a ticket, along with the payment of the additional levy, confers a financial benefit on the dependents of the passenger under an independent statutory contract. This benefit arises from a statutory obligation and represents an act of foresight. Therefore, it cannot be deducted from the compensation awarded under law," the court held.

The court further stated that allowing such a deduction would unfairly benefit the corporation and would be against public policy.

It concluded that the tribunal had erred in deducting Rs 3 lakh from the compensation.

Bengaluru STRR to reach Tamil Nadu by June

NHAI to deploy bowstring girder for Hoskote-Hosur section

MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) may finally reach the Tamil Nadu border by June as work on a key rail overbridge near Hoskote is picking up pace, according to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

The STRR's 20.9-km Hoskote-Hosur stretch was originally slated to open in February 2025, but has been delayed due to the launch of a bowstring girder on the Bengaluru-Chennai railway line at Lingadeeramallasandra on the city's southeastern outskirts.

The 54-metre-long bowstring girder — a bow-shaped railway overbridge — will carry three lanes in each direction. Its launch requires approvals from the South Western Railway (SWR).

In January, the SWR granted in-principle approval to the Temporary Arrangement Drawing (TAD) submitted by the NHAI and is expected to give final approval within a week, said KB Jayakumar, Project Director (Bengaluru), NHAI.

STRR to Hosur

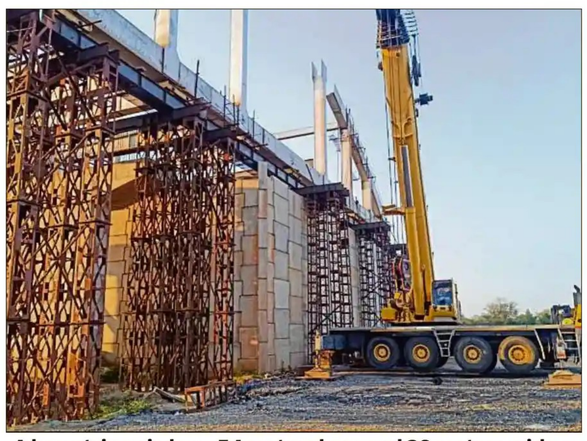
Connections: Hoskote-Hosur
Length: 20.9 km
Features: 6 lanes, 11 underpasses, 1 rail overbridge, 1 flyover
Cost: Rs 382 cr
Deadline: June 2026

The TAD is a technical drawing showing how the girder will be launched.

NHAI sources said the SWR took nine months to give in-principle approval. The contractor has fabricated the girder and moved it to the site, but foundation work near the tracks cannot begin without final approval, they noted.

Railway authorities need to inspect the girder before launch. Sources said the process involves site inspections by electrical and signalling teams, as well as welding checks by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO).

At the final stage, the railways needs to block or slow down train movements. "The location sees heavy train traffic. We may get traffic blocks once every 15 days, and only for a few hours," the sources said.



A bowstring girder — 54 metres long and 20 metres wide — will be launched above the Bengaluru-Chennai railway line at Lingadeeramallasandra near Hoskote.

Sources said of the 20.9 km, only 650 metres were pending. The cost is also expected to rise from the original estimate of Rs 382 crore.

"The project could have been completed earlier if approvals came faster. We may consider bypassing railway tracks entirely when planning such projects," the sources added.

The project deadline was extended by a year to February 2026. "We now aim to complete it by June, provided the railways gives all clearances," the sources noted.

NHAI officials called for a dedicated online clearance system — similar to the Centre's PARIVESH for environmental clearances — to fast-track approvals for infrastructure projects on railway land.

However, Ashutosh Kumar Singh, Divisional Railway Manager, Bengaluru, denied delays. "We provide clearances and traffic blocks once design approvals are submitted and are in order," he told *DH*.

With this stretch, the STRR's total operational length will increase to 102.6 km.

The stretch will connect to the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway (NE 7) and decongest Old Madras Road and Sarjapur Road.

When fully operational, the 288-km STRR will encircle all of Bengaluru and eliminate the need for long-distance commercial vehicles to enter the city.

The neglected stretch opposite the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) on Bannerghatta Road in Bilekahalli tells a story of neglect. *DH* had recently reported on the poor condition of the road. FILE PHOTO

Bannerghatta Road to get temporary repairs; full overhaul on the cards

Detailed project report awaited to relay road

BENGALURU, DHNS

At a glance

Funding secured: Rs 12.5 crore already deposited by BMRCL for asphalting work.

Ongoing works: 3.65-km stretch (Kalena Agrahara-Koli Farm) under progress; Rs 11.5-crore project.

Following criticism over the poor upkeep of Bannerghatta Main Road, senior officials of the Bengaluru South City Corporation inspected the road between Hosur Road and Koli Farm Junction.

The corporation will start asphalting the road, with the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) having already deposited Rs 12.50 crore for the work.

Until the detailed project report (DPR) for the comprehensive development of the road is ready, Corporation Commissioner KN Ramesh promised to resurface the damaged sections on a temporary basis.

He said work on the 3.65-km stretch from Kalena Agrahara to Koli Farm is already underway at a cost of Rs 11.50 crore, funded under the Chief Minister's Institutional Development Programme. Work is also underway on a 2.2-km stretch from Brigade Millennium Apartment in Puttenahalli to BK Circle.

DH had reported on the poor condition of the road recently.

During the inspection, the commissioner also reviewed plans for an underpass and a flyover at Vega City Mall to make the junction signal-free. The DPR is yet to be prepared.

Senior officials also inspected the drainage and the road in front of the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) on Bannerghatta Main Road.

The team inspected corporation-owned land next to Apollo Hospital on Bannerghatta Main Road. There was a suggestion to use the land for corporation offices, parking facilities, and a commercial building to generate revenue for the civic body.

BS Prahlad, Technical Director of Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Ltd, Chief Engineers of the South Corporation Basavaraj Kabade and KV Ravi, and other senior officials were present during the inspection.

RNA-based gene sequencing can enhance sarcoma care

BENGALURU, DHNS: A first-of-its-kind prospective study published in the 'Journal of Global Oncology' has found that RNA-based Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) testing can achieve a 41% diagnostic refinement and 26% treatment change in complex sarcoma cases.

Sarcoma is a serious and aggressive form of cancer that originates in connective tissues such as bones, fat, muscle, and cartilage. Its aggressive nature makes it difficult to diagnose and treat.

The study was announced by MedGenome, a genomics-driven diagnostics and research company, on Tuesday.

Conducted in collaboration with leading hospitals in India between 2022 and 2025, it demonstrated that introducing targeted RNA sequencing into a multidisciplinary team can significantly improve diagnostic clarity and aid treatment decisions, especially in patients with ambiguous or complex presentations.

Breakthrough

The study was conducted on 68 patients with unclear diagnoses. All samples were analysed using MedGenome's RNA fusion panel. RNA-based NGS provided clinically informative findings in half of all evaluated cases.

In over 40% of patients, diagnostic refinement or reclassification was made. In more than a quarter of cases, treatment decisions were changed based on molecular results.

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Date: 06-04-2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed and experienced contractors/ firms for the following works:
1. Construction of Prestressed Concrete Compound Wall.
2. Construction/Installation of Heavy-Duty Interlock Pavers.
3. Renovation of 12 Guest Rooms (Civil & Interior Works)
General Terms & Conditions:
* **Application : Interested contractors/ bidders may apply for a specific project or for all three projects, provided they demonstrate relevant experience in the respective fields.**
* **Tender Documents : A separate tender document must be collected for each individual work from the Club Office.**
* **Timings: Documents are to be collected between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM before 14.04.2026.**
*** Document Fee: Rs. 1,000/- + GST (Non-refundable) per document.**
Sd/- Sd/-
President, JWGC Hon. Secretary, JWGC

VIVEKANANDA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
Unit of Janatha Education Society
Dr.Rajkumar Road, Next to Orion Mall, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-55.

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed manufacturers/suppliers for the Supply of Uniforms for Vivekananda Schools at Kumbalagodu and Rajajinagar.

Sl No	Name of the work	Estimated cost Rs.	EMD (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender Document Rs. (Non Refundable)
1	Supply of School Uniforms as per Specified Material, Design, Colour & Size	18 Lakhs	75,000/-	2000/-

E.M.D by way of DD payable in favour of Secretary, Janatha Education Society, Bengaluru, Mob-6366733434
Tender documents will be issued from **10.04.2026 to 17.04.2026** during office hours at JES office, Rajajinagar. The Completed tenders will be received up to **12:00 Noon** on **21.04.2026** and will be opened on the same day at **1:00 pm or on 22.04.2026** at 11am.
The Management reserves the right to accept or reject any tenders without assigning any reason
H.C Balakrishna, Hon.President — Appareddy Harish, Hon.Secretary

MADHYA PRADESH RURAL ROAD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(AN AGENCY OF PANCHAYAT & RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVT. OF M.P.)
3rd Floor, Vikas Bhawan, Arera Hills, Bhopal (M.P.)
(GST No. 23AAATM9054A3ZX)

DPR CONSULTANCY OF BRIDGES
(Short Time E-Procurement Notice)

No. 3482/22/D-12/Brg.DPR/2026 **Bhopal, Dated : 08.04.2026**
Online Bids are invited from the reputed Consultants for preparation of DPR of Bridge under PMGSY as per details given below:
- No. of Packages - 22
- Nodal PIU - Khandwa, Khargone, Dhar-1, Barwani, Ujjain, Shajapur, Gwalior, Chhindwara, Jabalpur, Narsinghpur, Pandhurna, Balaghat-1, Mandla, Narmadapuram, Betul, Bhopal, Sehore, Rewa & Satna.
- No. of Bridges - 198
Total Estimated Construction Cost (in Rs.) - Rs. 6528000000.00

- Cost of Bid Document, Bid Security (EMD) and service charges as appearing on e-procurement portal are to be paid simultaneously through Debit Card/Credit Card/Internet Banking or system generated challan. For detailed procedure of online payment of EMD and submission of affidavit please refer condition number 2 of detailed NIT.

1. RFP document may be seen, downloaded and purchased from our e-procurement website **https://mptenders.gov.in** from 11:30 hrs. on **17.04.2026.**
2. Last date of Submission of bid is **11.05.2026 up to 13.00 hrs.**

Other details & Conditions may be seen in the detailed NIT and Tender Document for preparation of DPR of Bridges under PMGSY April 2026 amended up to date on our Website **http://mptenders.gov.in.**

CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER
M.P. Madhyam/125266/2026 **(Tender)**
''मेरी सड़क'' ऐप डाउनलोड कर, फीडबैक देकर राष्ट्र के विकास में सहयोग दें।

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the original General Power of Attorney dated 09.04.2010 executed by Mr. Thomas Jacob, S/o Mr. Kalekattil Chacko Jacob, in favour of Mr. Sabin Joseph, and the original Special Power of Attorney dated 25.06.2010 executed by Mrs. Meenakshi Purohit in favour of Mr. Fakhri Sarjan, in respect of acquisition and conveyance of the property more fully described below, have been lost/misplaced, and despite best efforts, the same could not be traced.The loss of the said documents has been reported to the jurisdictional police and Lost Article Reports have been registered vide Report No. 2145631/2026 dated 08.04.2026 and Report No. 2145648/2026 dated 08.04.2026. The said documents are not in force and stand cancelled and revoked. All persons are hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid documents. Any person having found or having any claim, right or interest in respect of the said documents is hereby required to notify the undersigned in writing within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which such claims, if any, shall be deemed to have been waived.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the vacant residential converted Plot No. 179, bearing Property No. 150200200600300557 and old Property No. 546/548/26/179 and with new Property No 546/584/26/179., situated in the layout known as "Prestige North West County", formed in Survey Nos. 52/*/1 and other survey numbers of Adde Vishwanathapura Village, Hesaraghatta Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk, Bengaluru.

Mr. Thomas Jacob (Deponent)
C/o Apt #D303 R&S Riviera Apartments,
Rachenahalli Main road, Thanisandra, Bangalore 560077
Date:09.04.2026 Place: Bengaluru

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the general public that our client **Mr. Kunal Balakrishne Gowda**, son of Mr. HD Balakrishne Gowda ('**Owner**'), is the sole and absolute owner in lawful and peaceful possession of immovable properties morefully described in the '**Schedule**' hereunder and is hereinafter referred to as the '**Schedule Properties**'. The Owner has acquired the Schedule Properties under a Sale Certificate dated 22.12.2025 (registered on 03.03.2026 as Document No. CRJ-I Part-(III)(a)-00001-2025-26, Book-1, at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Chamarajanagara) executed by Justice (Retd.) R.M. Lodha Committee.

Notice is hereby given that: (i) no person/s other than the Owner has any right, title, or interest in the Schedule Properties; (ii) any transaction, agreement, or document executed by any person/s claiming to act on behalf of or in respect of the Schedule Properties, without the express authorization of the Owner, shall be null and void and will not confer any right, title, or interest in the Schedule Properties; and (iii) any person/s entering, occupying, or attempting to use the Schedule Properties without the Owner's consent shall be deemed a trespasser. Unauthorized interference with the peaceful possession of the Schedule Properties will attract strict legal action, including criminal prosecution, under the applicable law.

SCHEDULE (Description of the Schedule Properties)

All that piece and parcel of immovable properties measuring in total 22 Acres 23 Guntas, all situated at Jakkahalli Village, Hangala Hobli, Gundlupet Taluk, Chamarajanagara District and described in the table below:

Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent	
		Acre	Guntas
1	1/1	03	01
2	59/1	00	09
3	55	02	38
4	56	03	19
5	57/2	01	35
6	58/2	02	26
7	59/2	02	15
8	110	04	00
9	57/1	02	00

Date: 09.04.2026. Place: Bengaluru.

Ms. Brijita Prakash, Partner
J. Sagar Associates, Advocates & Solicitors,
18th Floor, SKAV 909, No. 9/1, Residency Road, Richmond Circle, Bengaluru – 560025, Karnataka, India.
Ph. 080-43503600/080-43503676. Email: brijita.prakash@jsalaw.com

J-17011/658/2025-IC-Part(2)
Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports
(Department of Youth Affairs)
GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi-110023
Website: https://yas.gov.in

Walk-in-Interview

Walk-in-Interview for recruitment of Consultants on contract basis to be held on 13th April, 2026 at Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi-110023.
NB: For vacancies, other details and corrigendum, if any, please visit frequently our website https://yas.gov.in. No separate notice in this regard shall be published in Newspaper.

Sd/-
Under Secretary to the Govt of India
CBC 47107/11/0001/2627

CORRIGENDUM NO. 3

Corrigendum No. 3 for Tender Notice No.: DY.CEE/CON/RE-II/MLG/01/2026; **dtd.:** 04-02-2026 **against Tender No.** EL-CON-MLG-09-2025-26-D-K.

SN	Website Tender Notice detail before corrigendum, **EXISTINGS**	After the corrigendum in suppression of previous details, **TO BE READ AS**
1	**Closing of Tender:-** 22-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Physical submission of Mandatory Document listed in clause 2.11.2:-** 29-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Opening of tender:-** 30-04-2026, 16:00 hrs	**Closing of Tender:** 30-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Physical submission of Mandatory Document listed in clause 2.11.2:-** 06-05-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Opening of tender:-** 07-05-2026, 16:00 hrs

N.B.: Other terms and conditions of tender will remain same. For Detail please visit N.F. Railway website **www.ireps.gov.in**
Dy. CEE/CON/HQ/Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
APPLICATION NOTIFICATION NO.217/YTSK/SBC/10/2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites applications from the authorized ticketing agents appointed by Railways including JTBS, RTSA, RTA and agents appointed by IRCTC, Retail Service Providers of IRCTC for establishment & operation of Computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS) cum Unreserved Ticket System (UTS) terminals which shall be called as Yatri Ticket Suvidha Kendra (YTSK) over Bengaluru Division of South Western Railway for an initial tenure of Three Years.
Last date for submission of Application:
From 10:00 Hrs to 15:00 Hrs on 08-05-2026
For details log on: www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager
PUB/17/AAS/PRB/SWR/2026-27 Bengaluru
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.
South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/180/2026
Dated : 30-03-2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Consultancy services for Detailed master planning, urban designing, engineering & preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Yelahanka Mega Coaching Terminal - Augmentation of Coaching maintenance and Platform Facilities at Rail Wheel Factory, Yelahanka, Bengaluru **(Tender Ref. No. TECH-CONSULTANTS)**	Rs. 4,10,00,000/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 15:00 Hrs on 22-05-2026
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/16/AAS/PRB/SWR/2026-27
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.
South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

BEFORE THE KARNATAKA STATE CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSION BASAVA BHAVAN, HIGH GROUNDS BANGALORE- 560001.
Under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986
Consumer Case No. 42/2024
Manjunath ...Complainant
Versus
Amogha Karunada Purna Seva Souharada Credit Cooperative Limited and others ... **Opposite Parties**
To, Opposite Parties: 2. Mr. Shankar Dharmanna, Chairman, Amogha Karunada Purna Seva Limited, No.1, 1st Main Road, 2nd cross, Kaverinagara, Bengaluru- 560 077
CONSUMER COMPLAINT NOTICE UNDER SECTION 47 OF THE AMENDED C.P.A. 2019 TO THE OPPOSITE PARTY No.2
Whereas, the Complainant has filed the above complaint against you seeking remedy. You are hereby notify to appear before this Commission in person or through a pleader or person authorized to answer all the material facts relating to the complaint on **04/05/2026** at **10:30 AM.**
Take notice that in case of default of your appearance on the day mentioned above complaint will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under the hand and seal of this Commission on this 23/03/2026
By order of the Commission, ASST. REGISTRAR-CUM-ASST.ADMN. OFFICER K.S.C.D.R.C, BANGALORE- 560001.

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
Tender Notice No.: CKP-EAST-26-27-02, dated 07.04.2026. e-Tender is invited by Divisional Railway Manager/Engg/Chakradharpur, S.E. Railway, Chakradharpur for & on behalf of the President of India against open tender for the following work. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Name of work:** Upgradation/ modernization of infrastructure at existing Goods shed at GUMI (Gorumahisani) station. **Tender value:** ₹ 10,16,28,109.67. **EMD:** ₹ 20,32,600/-. **Cost of Tender Form:** 0.00. **Date of Opening :** 30.04.2026. The tender can be viewed at website **http://www.ireps.gov.in** The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered under on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering. **Note:** e-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (Authority–Railway Board's letter No. 2020/CE-I/CT/3E/GCC/Policy dtd. 16.07.2020). **(PR-26)**

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT
E-Tender Notice No. S&T/APDJ/01; dated: 02-04-2026. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **SN.1. E-Tender No.: AP-ST-01-2026-27; Name of Work:** Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of Siemens make Electronic Interlocking at 16 Stations for a period of Three (03) years i.e. 36 Months in Alipurduar Division. **Advertised Tender Value:** ₹5,06,98,414.08; **Bid Security:** ₹10,14,000.00. E-tenders will be **closed at** 15:00 hrs. on 28-04-2026 and **will be opened** on 28-04-2026 after closing. The complete information with tender document of above e-tender will be available in website **www.ireps.gov.in**.
DRM (S&T), Alipurduar Jn.
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"Serving Customers with a smile"

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
ELECTRICAL WORK
The Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), Central Railway, Solapur, for and on behalf of the President of India invites online e-tenders on Railways e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from reputed, experienced & licensed Electrical contractors for the following works. **Tender No.: SUR/TD/T/2026/06. Name of Work**: Electrical TRD portion of work in connection with **1)** Gharni - Creation of New Block station between Latur-Latur Road section. **2)** Provision of widening of width of PF-02 and shifting of OHE Mast at Latur Station. **Estimated cost**: ₹ 1,91,27,051.15. **Bid Security**: ₹ 3,82,600/-. **Completion Period**: 12 months. **Validity of offer**: 60 Days. **Date & time of tender closing on website**: 06.05.2026 at 15:00 hours.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), Central Railway, Solapur
AK/Sur-21
Unauthorized crossing of railway line is a punishable offense

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

Thank you Infant Jesus for blessings and favours received.
- Nagarathna & Family

THANKSGIVING
SAINT CLAIRE'S PRAYER
May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, adored, glorified & loved today and everyday throughout the world, now and forever. Amen. Ask Si. Claire for three favours two impossible and say nine Hail Mary's and the above prayer for nine days with lighted candle. Pray whether you believe or not and publish on the ninth day, Your request will be granted no matter how impossible it is.
Mandanna K.U & Family

Toddler falls from home's 1st floor, critical

BENGALURU, DHNS: A one-and-a-half-year-old girl is battling for her life after falling from the first floor of a residential building in Nayandahalli, West Bengaluru, police said.

The accident, which was caught on a CCTV camera, occurred on Monday when the toddler, who was playing inside the house, reportedly wandered out through the main door and accidentally fell. Her mother was in the kitchen boiling milk at the time.

The child sustained severe head injuries in the fall. On seeing her injured child, the mother reportedly fainted on the road. Neighbours rushed the toddler to a hospital, where she is currently undergoing treatment in the ICU. The Chandra Layout police have registered a case.

Ola Electric staff booked for Rs 1.6-cr fraud

BENGALURU, DHNS: Indiranagar police have booked an area manager and seven staff members of Ola Electric Technologies Private Ltd for allegedly misappropriating over Rs 1.6 crore by manipulating the billing system.

The accused have been identified as area manager Manjunath Uvappa, Ajit Sahani, H Prathipa, Dilip Kumar, Bharat S, Anandan P, Shahrukh Khan, and Sham Tabrez.

A case has been registered based on a complaint by the company's legal advisor.

The fraud came to light during an internal audit at the company on CMH Road. The accused allegedly generated fake bills through the cash register system and siphoned off money for personal use, violating company rules.

Police will issue notices to all of the accused as part of the investigation.

Bengaluru sizzles at 35.2°C as dry spell tightens grip

Westerly winds bringing dry weather to ease

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru recorded temperatures well above normal on Wednesday, with the city's base weather station logging 35.2°C at 5.30 pm — about 2.2°C above normal.

Relief is expected from Saturday, when the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast rainfall.

The HAL airport and Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) each recorded 35°C, which was 1.3°C and 0.3°C above normal, respectively. For both Bengaluru City and HAL airport, this was the highest maximum temperature recorded this month.

Scientist N Puviarasan, Head of IMD's Meteorological Centre, Bengaluru, said westerly winds in the morning were causing dry weather and clear skies during the day, pushing up temperatures.

Westerly winds in April tend to be warm and dry, limiting cloud cover and suppressing convective rainfall that typically cools the city in the evenings. Increased concretisation and traffic congestion add to the heat. Dry weather will prevail across Karnataka for the next two days, after which daytime temperatures are expected to begin falling around April 11-12. Bengaluru will likely see evening rainfall from that point, Puviarasan said.

Maximum temperatures are expected to hover around 35°C in the coming week, with cloudier skies helping cap the daytime heat.

April is historically the hottest month for Bengaluru. The city weather station has a mean maximum temperature of 34.1°C for the month, while HAL airport records a mean of 33.8°C.

The highest maximum temperature ever recorded at the city station was 39.2°C on April 25, 2016; HAL airport's record stands at 38.3°C, set on April 14, 1960.

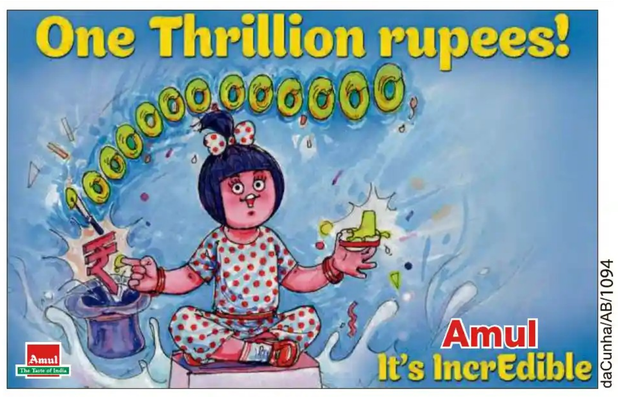
Bengaluru typically receives pre-monsoon thunderstorms in April, usually in the evenings.

The city weather station averages four rainy days in the month, bringing 61.7 mm of rainfall, while HAL airport averages 3.5 rainy days and 59.8 mm rainfall.

A man takes shelter from the scorching sun at Dr Ambedkar Veedhi.
DH FILE PHOTO

Relief incoming

- IMD forecasts rain from Saturday
- Temperatures likely to dip after April 11–12
- Expect evening showers to return
- Typical April brings pre-monsoon thunderstorms



Truck driver killed after ramming stationary goods vehicle at signal

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 51-year-old truck driver died after his vehicle rammed a stationary goods vehicle at a Mysuru Road signal early Wednesday, disrupting traffic briefly.

The deceased has been identified as Vijay Kumar, a resident of KR Puram.

Police said the accident occurred around 4 am near the Satellite Bus Stand signal.

Kumar was driving towards Rajarajeshwari Nagar carrying groceries. At the same time, another lorry transporting medicines from Tamil Nadu had halted at the signal.

Police said Kumar, who was speeding, lost control and crashed into the stationary vehicle. The impact was severe, leaving him trapped and crushed inside the cabin.

The body was shifted to Victoria Hospital for postmortem. Byatarayanapura Traffic Police have registered a case.

A similar accident occurred at the same spot in March 2025 — a serial crash killed a 40-year-old truck driver from Tamil Nadu, injured two others, and damaged five vehicles.

Mechanic stabbed to death; wife and in-laws under suspicion

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 23-year-old car mechanic was found dead under mysterious circumstances in the Annapoorneshwari Nagar police station limits on Tuesday night.

The deceased, Tauheeb Pasha, a resident of Mallathahalli, was married to Sohana four years ago. The couple has a one-year-old child.

The incident came to light when Pasha's mother approached the Annapoorneshwari Nagar police station, alleging that Sohana and her parents had stabbed him to death over domestic discord.

Sohana, however, told the police that Pasha was a drug addict and had threatened to stab himself. She claimed she tried to save him and ran out from the first floor to alert relatives staying on the ground floor.

He was rushed to a nearby hospital, where he was declared brought dead.

A case of suspicious death has been registered.

Preliminary investigations reveal that only the couple were inside the house when the incident took place and Sohana's parents were out of the city.

Pasha frequently harassed his wife over trivial issues, and she had threatened to leave him.

Upset over this, she may have stabbed him with a kitchen knife, the police said. Further investigations are on.

Man dupes FB friend of Rs 15L to marry another woman

Victim discovers the deceit after all money transfers

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a shocking case of betrayal and financial fraud, a businessman allegedly cheated a woman of over Rs 15.46 lakh on the promise of marriage and later married another woman using the same money.

According to the FIR, the accused, Ashish Dharavandar, 34, befriended the complainant on Facebook in 2020 while both of them were working in Malaysia.

Over time, he gained her trust and promised to marry her. He then allegedly convinced her to transfer money on multiple occasions, citing urgent personal and business needs.

Police said the woman transferred the amount over a period of time through credit cards and UPI transactions. Investigations revealed that after receiving the money, the accused began avoiding her, ignoring repeated calls and messages.

The victim was later shocked to discover that he had married another woman, allegedly using the money taken from her to fund the wedding and meet personal expenses.

Realising she had been duped, the 33-year-old woman approached the HAL police station and lodged a complaint.

Based on the complaint, efforts are underway to trace the accused, police said.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Bengaluru Advocates' Association: Event on AI legal work flow and neuro justice app demonstration; Anu Shivaraman, AV Chandrashekhar and others to participate; Hall No 1, High Court Unit; from 1.30 pm onwards.

Award Ceremony: Annual Karnataka women writers' association annual memorial awards; Hemalata Mahishi, SG Siddaramaiah and others to take part; Nayana Auditorium, Kannada Bhavana, JC Road; 2.30 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Partly cloudy sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	35.0°C
Minimum	22.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	NIL
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	59%
Sunset (Apr 9)	6:32 pm
Sunrise (Apr 10)	6:12 am
Moonrise	11:54 pm
Moonset	10:28 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

ENCORE
hyderabad
handprinted cotton
caftans • kurtas • shirts • tops • dress
home linen
at
raintree
sankey road, bengaluru
9, 10 and 11 april, 2026
10am to 7pm

गृह मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
HOME AFFAIRS
सत्यमेव जयते

National Forensic Sciences University
राष्ट्रीय न्यायालयिक विज्ञान विश्वविद्यालय
An Institution of National Importance under Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India
राष्ट्रीय महत्व का संस्थान, गृह मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

NFSU
विद्यया अमृतं अश्नुते

Admissions Open for Academic Year 2026-27

NFSU campuses at Gandhinagar, Delhi, Goa, Tripura, Bhopal, Dharwad, Guwahati, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Raipur, Jaipur, Nagpur and Varanasi

School of Forensic Science
M.Sc. Forensic Science
Gandhinagar, Delhi, Goa, Tripura, Bhopal, Guwahati, Bhubaneswar, Raipur, Nagpur, Chennai, Jaipur, Dharwad, Varanasi
M.Sc. Forensic Biotechnology
Gandhinagar
M.Sc. Multimedia Forensics
Gandhinagar
M.A. Mass Communication & Forensic Journalism
Gandhinagar
B.Sc.-M.Sc. Forensic Science
Gandhinagar, Delhi, Goa, Tripura, Bhopal, Dharwad, Varanasi
M.Sc. Nanotechnology (Specialization in Forensic Nanotechnology)
Gandhinagar

School of Medico-Legal Studies
M.Sc. Toxicology
Gandhinagar

School of Cyber Security & Digital Forensics
M.Tech. Cyber Security
Gandhinagar, Dharwad
M.Tech. in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
Gandhinagar, Goa
M.Sc. Cyber Security
Gandhinagar, Goa, Bhopal, Nagpur, Chennai
M.Sc. Digital Forensics & Information Security
Gandhinagar, Delhi, Goa, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Raipur, Jaipur
B.Tech.-M.Tech. Computer Science and Engineering (Cyber Security)
Gandhinagar, Delhi, Tripura, Dharwad, Guwahati

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M.Tech. Civil Engineering
(Specialization in Forensic Structural Engineering)
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B.Tech. Civil Engineering
Gandhinagar

School of Police Science & Security Studies
M.Sc. (Homeland Security)
Gandhinagar
M.A. (Police & Security Studies)
Gandhinagar

School of Behavioural Forensics
M.Sc. Neuropsychology
Gandhinagar
M.Sc. Forensic Psychology
Gandhinagar, Delhi
M.A. Criminology
Gandhinagar, Delhi
M.A. Clinical Psychology
Gandhinagar, Delhi
B.Sc. Criminology and Forensic Science
Gandhinagar, Delhi, Chennai

School of Management Studies
MBA Forensic Accounting & Fraud Investigation
Gandhinagar

For eligibility criteria and related information visit https://nfsu.ac.in/admission

Scan to Apply

MBA Cyber Security Management
Gandhinagar
MBA Hospital & Healthcare Management
Gandhinagar
MBA Business Analytics & Intelligence
Gandhinagar
BBA-MBA (Five Year Integrated)
Gandhinagar, Delhi
MBA Fintech Forensics
Gandhinagar

School of Law, Forensic Justice & Policy Studies
LL.M. (Cyber Law & Cyber Crime Investigation)
Gandhinagar, Bhubaneswar
LL.M. (Criminal Law & Criminal Justice Administration)
Gandhinagar, Delhi
LL.B. (Hons.)
Gandhinagar
B.Sc. LL.B. (Hons.)
Gandhinagar
BBA-LL.B. (Hons.)
Delhi

School of Pharmacy
M.Pharm. Forensic Pharmacy
Gandhinagar, Dharwad
M.Pharm. (Pharmaceutical Quality Assurance) (PCI Approved)
Gandhinagar
M.Sc. Chemistry (Forensic Analytical Chemistry)
Gandhinagar
M.Sc. Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Gandhinagar
M.Sc. Food Technology (Specialization in Forensic Food Analysis)
Gandhinagar

For Admission in Online Certification Courses visit : nfsu.mha.gov.in

Online Admission commences from 9th April 2026

Affiliated Institutes details for Admission of Academic Year 2026-27*

School of Forensic Science
B.Sc. - M.Sc. Forensic Science
• College of Traffic Management & Forensic Science, Faridabad (CTMFS)
• Lloyd Institute of Forensic Science, Greater Noida (LIFS)
• Uttar Pradesh State Institute of Forensic Sciences, Lucknow (UPSIFS)
• Narnarayan Shastri Institute of Technology - Institute of Forensic Sciences and Cyber Security, Ahmedabad (NSIT)
M.Sc. Forensic Science
• College of Traffic Management & Forensic Science, Faridabad (CTMFS)
• Lloyd Institute of Forensic Science, Greater Noida (LIFS)
• Uttar Pradesh State Institute of Forensic Sciences, Lucknow (UPSIFS)
• Narnarayan Shastri Institute of Technology - Institute of Forensic Sciences and Cyber Security, Ahmedabad (NSIT)

School of Cyber Security & Digital Forensics
B.Tech. - M.Tech. Compuer Science & Engineering (Cyber Security)
• Uttar Pradesh State Institute of Forensic Sciences, Lucknow (UPSIFS)
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M.Sc. Digital Forensics & Information Security
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BBA – MBA with specialization in Forensic Accounting and Fraud Investigation
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*Subject to renewal of the extension of provisional affiliation for the Academic Year 2026–27.

Man killed in jumbo attack in Kodagu

MADIKERI, DHNS: A 56-year-old man was killed in an elephant attack at Kayimani in Srimangala in Ponnampet taluk on Wednesday. The deceased has been identified as Rathu.

Madikeri Wildlife Division Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) Nehru said that thick fog had covered the area in the morning. Rathu had met with an accident a few years ago and he was unable to run upon noticing the elephant. He sustained severe injuries and died while being shifted to a hospital in Kutta.

The Forest Department had issued a warning on Tuesday, urging residents to be cautious as the elephant movement had been noticed in the area.

Governor asks govt to withdraw order freezing KSOU's accounts

Gehlot flags attempts to browbeat vice-chancellor

BENGALURU, DHNS

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, who is also the Chancellor of all public universities in the state, has questioned the government's decision to freeze Karnataka State Open University's (KSOU) bank accounts, besides expressing his disapproval of actions that have impeded the university's functioning.

In a letter to Minister of Higher Education Dr M C Sudhakar, the Governor has directed him to withdraw the communication issued to the private bank dated March 24. Instructing the government to desist from taking any further action that could interfere with the varsity's 'lawful' functioning, the Governor added, "Any material relating to alleged irregularities at the varsity, if available, shall be placed before the Chancellor for consideration in accordance with established procedure."

Cautioning the government to ensure that its actions were circumscribed by statutory framework and constitutional limitations, the Governor said, "Any deviation will be viewed seriously as a deliberate and conscious encroachment of statutory authority. The government is hereby directed to submit a compliance report on the matter."

KSOU found itself on the firing line after it hosted an event around Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's 'Ekatma Manava Darshana'. After Congress MLCs flagged the varsity's decision in the Council, the Department of Higher Education issued a show-cause notice to KSOU Vice-Chancellor Sharanappa V Halse. The VC was asked to explain the varsity's failure to invite the Higher Education Minister to the event, besides the lapse in protocol.

Although the VC defended the varsity's actions by pointing out that the university had merely allowed the use of its campus on rent, the government, dissatisfied with his reply, instructed the varsity's bank to freeze KSOU's accounts. Accusing the state government of trying to arm-twist the varsity and the Vice-Chancellor, the Governor observed that the disciplinary provisions of the KSOU Act had been bypassed. He also flagged the attempts to browbeat the KSOU VC.

Pointing out that, in his tenure as the Chancellor, the state government had never acted against any public university without first intimating him, the Governor stressed the need for the government to take him into confidence before such decisions are taken.

Questioning the legal basis for the communication issued to the bank, Gehlot opined that the government had acted without forethought for the repercussions that such a move might have on the employees and wellbeing of the university.

'Aim to bring all varsities under a single Act'

Meanwhile, Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar on Wednesday said that the government would persist with its efforts to amend the Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000. "Some universities including KSOU have dedicated pieces of legislation. We are trying to bring in an amendment that will bring all varsities under the same Act," he said.

II PUC exam-1 results today

BENGALURU, DHNS: The results of II PUC examination-1 will be announced on Thursday and the same will be available to students online after 3 pm.

Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) stated that the students would receive results on their registered mobile numbers through Whatsapp/SMS. They can also get results through the website https://karresults.nic.in and KarnatakaOne mobile app.

As informed by the KSEAB, for the first time the marks card will be made available on Digilocker (Thursday 3 pm onwards). To download marks cards, students can visit http://www.digilocker.gov.in.

To know the marks card downloading process, they can visit the video link http://tinyurl.com/mw84wmh9

Earlier, the KSEAB had announced the release of results on April 7. However, due to the code of conduct in place because of bypolls for Davangere South and Bagalkot seats, the announcement of results had to be postponed.

This year, a total of 7.10 lakh students appeared for II PU Examination-1.

Three from B'luru drown in Vijayapura's Bhutnal lake

VIJAYAPURA, DHNS: Three tourists from Bengaluru, including a 12-year-old boy, drowned in the historic Bhutnal lake near here on Wednesday.

The police have identified the deceased as Mohammad Hayat (12), Hyder Pasha (32) and Abdul Khuddus (35), residents of RT Nagar in Bengaluru.

The victims were part of a 14-member family, who were on a tour of Vijayapura. During their visit to the lake, Hyder had accidentally slipped into the waterbody. Khuddus and Pasha entered the lake in a bid to save Hayat.

The Fire and Emergency Services personnel and the Adarsh Nagar police rushed to the spot and pulled all three out of the lake. While Hayat and Pasha died instantaneously, Khuddus died en route to a Vijayapura hospital.

The bodies were handed over to the relatives after conducting the post-mortem at Vijayapura district hospital. The Adarsh Nagar police have registered a case.

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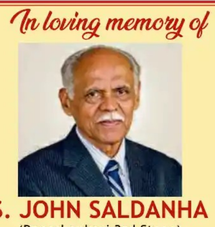
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(Banashankari 3rd Stage)
23 December, 1932 - 6 April, 2026
Funeral service:
9th April 2026 | 11:00 AM
Christu Prabhalaya Church,
Jayanagar 4th T Block, Bengaluru
Followed by burial at:
St. Patrick's Cemetery
Gate No. 6, Hosur Road, Bengaluru
In Grief
Wife - Eveline Saldanha, Children, grandchildren & great grandchildren

Women's quota, LS seat hike: Union Cabinet clears Bill

Cabinet, From Page 1

Parties like the DMK have also objected to the move.

Their argument is that the proposed formula would favour bigger states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar. The Samajwadi Party has already demanded that the implementation of 33% quota should be based on Census 2027, as it would provide the latest demographic data, and not the Census 2011.

The Opposition views the government's sudden move to implement the 33% quota, which it was not inclined to while the law was being passed three years ago, is to avoid demands for a quota-within-quota for OBCs, as Census 2027 count castes.

They claim that the government is aware that the demand would rise against the backdrop of the caste count.

CAN'T BE 'BEE'SIEGED

Attacking a beehive can unleash fury on animals and humans. But this Oriental Honey Buzzard bird fearlessly feasts on bees and their larvae from a hive on a tree near Paschima Vahini in Srirangapatna taluk of Mandya district. The bird is blessed with natural protective gear against stings. DH PHOTO/ANUP RAGH T

Class 10 student from Kerala goes missing from Chandradrona hill range

CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS

A class 10 student from Kerala, who, along with family members, had come on a tour to the popular hill destinations of Mullayyanagiri and Bababudangiri, has gone missing.

She could not be traced, though her family members, the Forest Department staff and the police searched extensively on Tuesday night and Wednesday.

The student was part of a group of 40 family members who had travelled from Palakkad to Chikkamagaluru. The group had gone to visit the Manikyadhara Falls, located in the Chandradrona hill range.

Her family members noticed that the girl was missing at around 5.30 pm. They searched for her till 8 pm before informing the police. The police and the Forest Department staff swung into action immediately and continued the search operation throughout the night. Thermal drones were used to continue the search operation.

More than 100 personnel from the Fire and Emergency Services Department, police, forest personnel, SDRF members, and the local disaster management team searched near the waterfalls and other sensitive areas.

The rescue teams tied ropes and descended into steep terrains to carry out search operations in the difficult landscape. Drones were also deployed to scan the surrounding areas thoroughly, but the missing girl could not be traced.

The authorities are examining details of all vehicles that entered and exited the area and are verifying the phone numbers of tourists who visited the location.

The search is being conducted from multiple angles as the officials continue efforts to locate the girl.

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Children: Pavithra, Murugendra, Shraddha and Vrata.
Sons-in-law: Nataraj, Leighton and Uday.
Grand Children: Yasha, Varun, Drithi and Dylan.
Relatives and friends.

Two-day Campus To Career summit in B'luru from May 15

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Department of Higher Education, along with other departments including Skill Development, IT/BT, Commerce and Industries, will organise a two-day Campus To Career (C2C) summit in Bengaluru on May 15 and 16.

Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar on Wednesday said that the primary objective behind organising the summit was to brainstorm on the need to incorporate skill-based education in curricula to enhance students' employment prospects.

"The initiative is aimed at equipping students in government colleges and universities with skills sought by the industry. The government, industrial bodies and academic experts will assemble on a single platform to deliberate on education models aimed at improving the employment prospects of students," he said.

The landscape of higher education was changing across the globe, pointed out Sudhakar, emphasising the need to impart skill-oriented education to students.

"The summit will focus on incorporating skills sought by industry in the academic curricula, and preparing students by offering them practical exposure. Reputed companies from across the state will participate in the summit and share their insights on education, employment and emerging opportunities," said the minister.

Skill Development Department Secretary Manoj Kumar Meena, Secretary of Higher Education Department Khusbhu Choudhary, Commissioner of Collegiate Education Manjushree N, along with representatives from Manipal Academy of Higher Education and ELETS Techno Media were in attendance at the media interaction.

'Decision on State Education Policy soon'

The Karnataka government is likely to take a decision on the new State Education Policy at the upcoming Cabinet meeting, said Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar.

"The goals of the higher education system have already been aligned with the proposed policy. Discussions are under way to ensure academic excellence is maintained. Given that some ministers are reviewing the draft of the policy, the Cabinet will soon take a decision on the issue," he added.

State chief secretary writes to Maharashtra counterpart for TET in Kannada

KALABURAGI, DHNS: State chief secretary Dr Shalini Rajneesh, on Tuesday, wrote to her Maharashtra counterpart Rajesh Aggarwal, urging him to conduct the Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) in Kannada for teachers of Kannada medium schools.

Deccan Herald published an article on April 5, highlighting the plight of Kannada teachers and candidates who completed DEd or BEd in Kannada medium in Maharashtra.

They face a difficult situation while writing TET, because question papers are only in Marathi or English.

While the Maharashtra State Council of Examinations offers Kannada medium option while filling out application forms for teachers' recruitment exams, the exam body doesn't conduct the test in Kannada.

Kannada outfits allege that many qualified candidates are failing due to the lack of question papers in Kannada, leading to shortage of Kannada teachers in Maharashtra.

As per the Supreme Court's directions, it is mandatory for all serving teachers to clear TET by 2027 to ensure job security. Expressing gratitude for issuing the notification to recruit Kannada teachers to fill vacancies in Maharashtra's Kannada medium schools, the chief secretary's letter pointed out that 80% of linguistic minority Kannadigas live in Jatt, Akkalkot, Dakshin Solapur taluks and in parts of Mumbai. She said Maharashtra had 377 Kannada medium schools, with 44,860 students.

As these linguistic minority students and teachers come under the protection of Articles 30, 347, 350, 350A and 350B of the Constitution, the current unavailability of TET in Kannada has caused significant distress and professional uncertainty among serving Kannada-medium teachers, Shalini Rajneesh said in her letter.

"The Karnataka government consistently conducts TET in Marathi for Marathi-speaking candidates in Karnataka. Hence, I request you to extend a reciprocal facility to Kannada-speaking people of Maharashtra. Since the last date for applying for TET is fast approaching (April 16), I request you to intervene in the matter with utmost urgency," she said.

The CS urged the Maharashtra chief secretary to direct the education department to provide the option of writing TET in Kannada for those currently serving in Kannada medium schools and for all future teachers' recruitments.

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Lokayukta raid on retd vet varsity officer yields Rs 4.38-cr assets

BIDAR, DHNS: Lokayukta searches revealed Rs crore in disproportionate assets linked to Suresh K L, the retired finance controller at the Bidar-based Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University.

The Lokayukta police carried out simultaneous searches at the retired officer's premises in Bidar and Bengaluru on Tuesday.

During the raids, immovable assets worth Rs 3.36 crore, which includes two plots, as many houses and an agricultural land measuring 3 acres and 34 guntas, were identified. The officer, a native of Hassan, is found to have amassed movable assets worth Rs 1.02 crore, including gold jewellery worth Rs 23,76 lakh and vehicles worth Rs 46 lakh.

According to the Lokayukta officials, the retired officer has acquired disproportionate assets worth Rs 3.42 crore. A case has been registered at Bidar Lokayukta police station.

'SC has right to decide what is superstition'

Supreme Court, From Page 1

"Even assuming that there is a superstitious practice, it is not for the court to determine that it is superstition. Under Article 25(2)(b) of the Constitution, it is for the legislature to step in and enact a reform law," he said.

"The legislature can say that a particular practice is superstition and requires reform. There are several such statutes and laws, for the prevention of black magic and other such practices," Mehta added.

The court, however, said the statement is too simplistic, as the court has the right and jurisdiction to hold whether something is superstitious.

"What will follow is for the legislature to deal with. But, in court, you cannot say that whatever the legislature decides is the last word. That cannot be," the court said.

Justice B V Nagarathna said that in determining what an essential religious practice is, the court should view it through the lens of the philosophy of that particular religion.

PIL jurisdiction

With regards to Sabarimala, the apex court, however, questioned how persons who are not devotees of Lord Ayyappa could challenge the temple custom invoking the PIL jurisdiction of the court.

On this, Mehta said that this was exactly one of the questions referred to the nine-judge bench whether a person not belonging to a religious denomination or religious group can question a practice of that religious denomination or religious group by filing a PIL.

"This question must be decided first. No devotee has challenged it, it is the person who has no concern," Justice Nagarathna said. The 2018 Sabarimala judgment came on a PIL filed by Indian Young Lawyers Association.

Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan submitted that the petition was filed on behalf of Hindu women who may have been reluctant to approach the court.

Mehta also submitted that concepts of transformative constitutionalism and constitutional morality as standards cannot be used to adjudicate claims under Article 25 of the Constitution.

He contended the 2018 judgment allowing entry of women of all ages to Sabarimala was wrong in adopting the yardstick of constitutional morality.

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I, S NAGENDRAN resident of No.107, B1 SFS, 6th B Main, NewTown Yelahanka, Bangalore-560064 have changed my name to NAGENDRAN S vide affidavit dated 08/04/2026 sworn before notary H.Sridhar Rao, Bangalore

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Personnel, deputed for byelection duty, board buses to their respective polling stations in Davangere on Wednesday. (Right) Election staff leave the mustering centre in Bagalkot. DH PHOTOS

Davangere South, Bagalkot all set for byelections today

Voting will be held from 7 am to 6 pm

DAVANGERE/BAGALKOT, DHNS:

The Davangere South and Bagalkot Legislative Assembly constituencies will vote in the byelections necessitated by the demise of Congress MLAs Shamanur Shivashankarappa and H Y Meti, respectively, on Thursday.

On Wednesday, polling staff and security personnel started arriving at the mustering centre at DRR school on PB road in Davangere since morning.

They were informed about the polling stations assigned to them. Returning officer Santosh Kumar distributed the electronic voting machines (EVMs) and other election material to the poll staff.

The officials received the control unit, ballot unit, VVPAT, a copy of the electoral list, agent appointment form and other documents.

After 3 pm, the election officers and staff boarded vehicles bound for their respective polling stations along with security personnel. Officials from various departments, teachers, police and central armed police force (CAPF) personnel have been deployed for the bypoll duty.

A PRO (polling station presiding officer), assistant PRO, two polling officers, 'D' group personnel, CAPF personnel and booth-level officers have been assigned for each polling booth.

A total of 284 polling booths have been set up (one for 800 to 1,200 votes). The voting is from 7 am to 6 pm.

There are a total of 2,31,072 voters here, including 1,13,339 male, 1,17,690 female and 43 third gender voters.

Congress candidate Samarth Shamanur Mallikarjun and BJP nominee Srinivas T Dasakariappa are not voters in the constituency.

Voters to decide fate of 9 candidates in Bagalkot

In Bagalkot, a total of 1,564 personnel and 2,500 security personnel have been deployed for the byelection.

Nine candidates are in the fray here.

There are a total of 2,59,797 voters, including 1,26,999 men, 1,32,775 women and 23 sexual minority voters.

As many as 322 polling booths have been set up in the constituency, including two women's booths and one booth each for youths, specially abled voters and a theme-based polling station.

The staff collected EVMs and other election material at the mustering centre at the government first-grade college at Navanagar, before leaving for their respective polling booths.

VIT Chennai holds University Day

Meritorious students received medals and certificates at VIT Chennai's University Day.

Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), Chennai, held its University Day on Tuesday. Binod Kumar, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Indian Bank, was the chief guest. Major Vaibhav Chaurasia, alumnus of VIT Chennai, attended as guest of honour. The event was presided over by VIT's Founder and Chancellor Dr G Viswanathan in the presence of Vice President Dr G V Selvam.

Binod Kumar encouraged students to prepare themselves for a rapidly-changing world. He stressed on the importance of continuous effort and adaptability to overcome challenges and on seizing opportunities. "In banking, we think of how we can make the life of customers easy. This helps in striving for perfection within yourself," he said.

Major Vaibhav Chaurasia urged students to draw inspiration from their surroundings and focus on positive influences. "Never give up, never doubt yourself. Things will not work out and things will go wrong, but you have to keep working hard and always do the right thing," he said.

Dr G Viswanathan underscored the transformative power of education. He stated that education uplifts not only individuals and families but also society, the state and the nation as a whole. "Achieving the vision of a developed nation depends on universal access to quality education and economic growth driven by knowledge", he said.

The event concluded with distribution of medals and certificates to meritorious students in recognition of their academic and overall excellence.

VIT Chennai's Pro Vice Chancellor Prof T Thyagarajan, Director Prof K Sathiyanarayanan and Additional Registrar Prof P K Manoharan also attended the event.

Curated by DH Brandspot

86 taluks contaminated, B'luru still over-exploited...

Groundwater, From Page 1

In six taluks, the situation has deteriorated: Magadi (Bengaluru South), Kamalanagar (Bidar), Laxmeshwar (Gadag), Aland (Kalaburagi), Chadchan and Indi (both Vijayapura). Groundwater extraction ranges from 5.91% in Madikeri (Kodagu) to a staggering 378.85% in Bengaluru East, the report shows. District-wise extraction ranges from 25.44% in Ballari to 184.43% in Kolar.

The report also notes a small decline in groundwater extraction for domestic use thanks to the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

Contamination

Nitrate is the highest contaminant of groundwater in 41 taluks, which include Bengaluru North and Yelahanka, the report shows. There is high salinity in 17 taluks, fluoride in 15 taluks and uranium in 13 taluks.

AI-based surveillance

Boseraju said the government will soon initiate AI-based satellite surveillance for real-time data for continuous groundwater monitoring. This will be under the Digital Water Stack (DWS) initiative, the minister said.

"Instead of depending solely on the 120-day monsoon, we're ensuring water availability across all 365 days through scientific management. This has strengthened long-term water security for both farmers and urban residents," he claimed.

Bypolls: Siddu miffed as EC seeks info on 'guarantee' releases

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday slammed the Election Commission of India (ECI) for asking his government to provide details on the release of funds under the 'guarantee' schemes in the Davangere and Bagalkot districts where bypolls are scheduled.

Voters at Davangere South and Bagalkot constituencies will exercise their franchise on Thursday.

"Let me state this clearly: Our guarantee schemes are not this by-election-time announcements. These are ongoing programmes of our government, implemented as part of the commitments made to the people during the 2023 Assembly elections," Siddaramaiah said, adding that funds are regularly transferred to beneficiaries in "a transparent and structured manner."

Targeting the BJP for "double standards," the CM said the saffron party copied the 'guarantee' schemes in other states. "The Karnataka model has clearly set the benchmark for the country. But what is deeply concerning is the selective approach of the ECI," he said.

"In states like Maharashtra and Bihar, cash transfer schemes have been announced or fast-tracked just before elections, with direct financial benefits extended to voters. These are well-documented patterns. Yet, the ECI remained silent and allowed them to proceed without scrutiny," Siddaramaiah said.

"This is not neutrality - this is complicity. When BJP or NDA governments act, the ECI looks the other way. But when Karnataka fulfils its promises, the same ECI becomes hyperactive," he said.

"Targeting K'taka's guarantee schemes is not just political - it is anti-poor, anti-women, and anti-K'taka. Our government will remain committed to its promises and will continue to deliver for every Kannadiga," Siddaramaiah said.

'Himanta's Brahmin privilege is behind attack on AICC chief'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj minister Priyank Kharge on Wednesday accused Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of targeting AICC president and his father Mallikarjun Kharge due to "caste privilege," alleging that Sarma's remarks reflected a Brahminical mindset shaped by RSS ideology.

Defending his father's controversial statement likening the RSS-BJP to "poisonous snakes," Priyank Kharge said, "Himanta Biswa Sarma has become desperate. Modi or BJP have no answers to the questions raised by Kharge. Himanta has caste privilege and it has entered his head. He was better off when he was in Congress. But now, with RSS' training, this caste privilege is in his head. What is Himanta Biswa Sarma's community? Isn't he a Brahmin? That is why he can say anything about Dalits or Dalit leaders. RSS also teaches the same, the 'Chaturvarna' ideology."

"He (Sarma) belongs to an enlightened community and thinks he can speak anything about other communities. Will Modi justify this kind of remarks by his party's chief minister against the LOP in Rajya Sabha?" he asked.

Responding to questions on whether the senior Kharge's remarks were provocative, he said, "What can you do to a poisonous snake? If the snake catcher is not available, what do the villagers do?"

On BJP's protests and complaint to the Election Commission, Priyank said, "Let BJP protest, they have to show their loyalty to their master. What wrong has Mr Kharge spoken? Now, should we let a poisonous ideology thrive in our society? RSS ideology is detrimental to our country's progress as it has no place for the Constitution, minorities, Dalits, backward classes, women, or Adivasis. They believe in Manusmriti."

Taking a dig at the RSS over a complaint filed in Assam, Priyank said, "How can RSS file a complaint? They don't have a letterhead as they claim they are not registered. Let them complain individually. They have filed cases against me and Dinesh Gundu Rao. They claim their organisation is not registered and at the same time allege it has been humiliated. Is RSS in existence or not? You (RSS) have no registered office, but have a chief. There is income and expenditure but you don't pay taxes. Is tax evasion patriotism now?."

BJP slams Kharge over snake remark, asks him to get some rest

BENGALURU, DHNS

State BJP leaders on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge over his remarks against the BJP and the RSS, likening them to "poisonous snakes", by demanding legal action and recommending some "rest" for the veteran leader.

Former minister C T Ravi alleged Kharge's remark reflected his "frustration" and a "mentally unstable" mind, and demanded the authorities to register a suo motu complaint.

"Kharge has held many positions over six decades of his political career. But his statements do not reflect maturity or statesmanship as it is driven by hate. He was attempting to instigate Muslims and has acted against democracy. As a follower of Mahatma Gandhi, you should not make such statements. Is this what Gandhi taught? Is this the principle of non-violence? Would today's Gandhi endorse such remarks?" he questioned.

Ravi also asked if Kharge's speech would not fall under the proposed anti-hate speech Bill's ambit. "Priyank Kharge defending his father suggests it is hereditary mental instability," he said, warning such statements could have a negative impact on society. He said the Election Commission should derecognise Congress if it endorsed such remarks.

Ravi said, "Ideological differences existed between BJP and Congress, But we never called for killing Congress workers. We ask people to defeat them electorally."

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy urged Union Home Minister Amit Shah to get an FIR registered against Kharge and send him to Tihar jail.

BJP Yuva Morcha workers stage a protest against Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's remarks against RSS and BJP at the Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Wednesday. DH PHOTO

CHALAVADI NARAYANASWAMY
Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council

"Senior Kharge's both zubaan (tongue) and dhimag (brain) are not functioning properly. It looks like fatigue has overtaken him. He needs both physical and mental rest. So, I appeal to the Union Home Minister get an FIR registered against Kharge senior and lodge him in Tihar Jail so that he could get rest."

'Custodial death' in Viveknagar police station: HC notice to state in PIL seeking SIT probe

BENGALURU, DHNS

The high court of Karnataka has ordered notice to the state government in a PIL filed by People's Union for Civil Liberties-Karnataka over the alleged custodial death of a youth in November 2025.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Poonacha also ordered notice to the Karnataka State Human Rights Commission.

On November 12, 2025, two policemen from Viveknagar police station detained Darshan, 23, who was sitting outside his house in Sonnenahalli, Viveknagar.

When Darshan's mother Adilakshmi and her elder son Ajith asked for the reason, the policeman said that he had shown a machete to scare food delivery App staff.

On November 15, Adilakshmi was summoned to the station and police asked her to arrange money to take her son to Unity Foundation Rehabilitation Centre due to his drinking issues. On November 26, 2025, Darshan's father P L Gopi was informed by the rehabilitation centre that his son had passed away due to breathing issues.

The petition said that Adilakshmi filed a complaint against the police inspector, and three other police personnel of Viveknagar police station based on the post-mortem report issued by the Victoria Hospital. According to the petition, the post-mortem confirmed that Darshan had suffered injuries. In December 2025, Darshan's custodial death matter was transferred to CID for investigation.

The petitioner has sought directions for setting up of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to take over the investigation in the FIR registered with the Madanayakanahalli police station. The petition stated that the matter is a custodial murder and needs to be investigated by a SIT.

The CID will not be able to do justice as till date no accused police officer has been taken to custody, the petition said.

The petitioner further sought directions for payment of Rs 50 lakh compensation to the legal heirs of Darshan and to provide protection to the family members who are the witnesses in the case.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast April 09: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	34.4	18	00
Bidar	35.2	21	00
Vijayapura	36.1	19.5	00
Dharwad	34.2	18.4	00
Haveri	35.2	19.6	00
Kalaburagi	39	23.6	00
Raichur	37.8	22.6	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	31.8	21.8	00
Karwar	34	25	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	33.2	23.7	00

INTERIOR SOUTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	31.1	18.2	00
Bengaluru	35.2	22	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	34	19.5	00
Davangere	34.5	19	00
Hassan	33.8	14.8	00
Mysuru	37	19	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	35.2	17	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	28.8	16.8	06
Kolkata	34	20.5	16
Mumbai	31.8	25.6	00
Chennai	36.2	27.6	00
Pune	34.8	21.1	00
Hyderabad	37	23	00
Th'puram	36.4	25.7	00

High court upholds 'Leave India Notice' to US national

BENGALURU, DHNS

The High Court of Karnataka has dismissed the petition filed by a US citizen challenging the 'Leave India Notice' issued to him for breach of visa conditions.

"A foreign national entering India on a tourist visa is bound by the limitations inherent to such visa and cannot, under the guise of subsequent arrangements, undertake business activities in violation of law.

The petitioner is directed to comply with the impugned notice and exit India forthwith, in accordance with law," Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum said, while dismissing the petition filed by Joseph Ignazzio Zambuto.

The petitioner contended that he had initially entered India in August 2025 and departed the country in January 2026. It was submitted that he married a Mauritius citizen of Indian origin and re-entered India on January 26, 2026, on a business visa valid till January 15, 2027.

He challenged the February 19, 2026, 'Leave India Notice' claiming that it is wholly bereft of reasons and does not disclose any material. The petitioner stated that such action militates against India's long-cherished civilisational ethos in the principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'.

On the other hand, Aravind Kamath, Additional Solicitor General, and Aditya Singh, representing the union government, submitted that the petitioner had entered on a e-tourist visa and indulged in commercial activities, such as entering into contracts, employing personnel, and affecting monetary transactions. These transactions were carried out in the name - 'Etta Global Partners LLC', a company stated to be registered in Puerto Rico, a territory of the United States. The company does not have any registered office in India, it was submitted.

"In the present case, the admitted factual position, fortified by documentary evidence, establishes that the petitioner, while holding an e-tourist visa, has engaged in business and commercial activities in clear contravention of the statutory framework. It is in this background that the respondent–authority has invoked its powers under Section 7 (2) read with Section 72C of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025 and has issued the impugned 'Leave India Notice'. This Court finds that the said action is in strict conformity with the provisions of the Act, 2025 and does not suffer from any arbitrariness, illegality, or procedural infirmity warranting interference under Article 226 of the Constitution of India," the court said.

Surendrakumar Bajpai appointed Mumbai JD(S) prez

MUMBAI, DHNS: The Janata Dal (Secular) has appointed computer engineer and lawyer Surendrakumar Bajpai as the party's Mumbai unit president.

On the advice of the National President of Janata Dal (Secular) and former prime minister H D Deve Gowda, Maharashtra State Janata Dal (Secular) president Nathabhau Shewale has officially appointed Bajpai as the Mumbai chief.

Bajpai, who previously served as the working president of the Maharashtra state unit, transitions into this leadership role with a mandate to revitalise the party's presence in the metropolis.

A highly qualified professional, Bajpai brings a unique blend of technical and legal expertise to the political arena, having both a computer engineering and a law degree.

"I am deeply committed to the overall upliftment of Mumbai City. Our focus will be on addressing the core urban issues that affect the common man," he stated. Besides, Haji Salim Bhatti was appointed as the Acting President of Mumbai JDS.

PM SHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA - CRPF
YELAHANKA, BENGALURU - 560 064. Tele No. : 080-28567017
E-mail : kvcrpfyelfin@gmail.com
Website : https://crpfyelahanka.kvs.ac.in

WALK IN INTERVIEW

WALK IN INTERVIEW ON 18th April 2026 FOR THE FOLLOWING CONTRACTUAL POSTS FROM 9.00 AM

Post	Date & time
Primary Teacher, PRT (Music), PGT (English), PGT (Maths), PGT (Geography), TGT (Sanskrit), Vocational Instructor, Self Defence Instructor, Kannada Teacher	18th April 2026, 9.00 am onwards

Eligible & interested candidates must register on https://samvidasathi.gov.in/for interview. For Registration and further details please visit our Website : https://crpfyelahanka.kvs.ac.in. Phone No. 080-28567017.
Registration will be from 06.04.2026 to 18.04.2026 (2:30 pm)

Sd/- Principal

Govt claims no shortage of auto LPG, urges public not to panic

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government on Wednesday dismissed reports of shortage of auto LPG across Karnataka, terming them 'false and misleading', and urged the public and the auto drivers not to panic.

A press note, issued by the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Disputes Department, stated that some media outlets had reported long queues at auto gas stations based on rumours of supply constraints. "There is no shortage of auto gas at government-run outlets," the statement clarified, while accepting that some private auto LPG suppliers were facing supply issues.

The government noted that public sector oil marketing companies such as Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited have adequate supplies.

Vatal Nagaraj arrested, released on bail

BENGALURU, DHNS: Kannada Chalavali Vatal Paksha leader Vatal Nagaraj was arrested on Wednesday in connection with a pending case after a court issued an arrest warrant. He was later released on bail.

Basaveshwaranagar police produced him before the special sessions court for MPs/MLAs, which granted bail. The case is related to a protest held during the Covid-19 restrictions in 2021 in front of the residence of Rajajinagar BJP MLA S Suresh Kumar. Nagaraj had staged the protest demanding that SSLC (Class 10) students be passed without exams due to the pandemic.

Minister wants discussion on wildlife birth control

'Population of some species is rising exponentially'

Eshwar Khandre.

BENGALURU, DHNS

The rising incidents of human-wildlife conflict have necessitated a discussion on animal birth control, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said on Wednesday, as he called for wider debates on the issue among the public as well as the experts.

The minister broached the subject while speaking to the media about the death of a person who was trampled by a wild elephant in Srimangala on Wednesday, adding to a series of casualties over the last two months.

Khandre said the population of some species was rising exponentially and there was a need to check such growth.

"We need to protect wildlife as well as people by preventing harm to both," he said, stressing the need to explore birth-control measures for animals.

While he did not mention any species, a senior official said the forest department was looking at immunocontraception of elephants and exploring a viable and humane birth-control measure for leopards.

The minister sought to clarify that the proposal was just an idea and not a decision.

He noted that the government was exploring other options like an elephant soft-release centre. The idea of birth control needs discussion, he said.

"The matter is before the Supreme Court. A meeting has to be held with senior officials on consulting experts and legal pundits before making a submission before the apex court," he added.

Animal birth control, particularly for elephants, came to the fore a decade ago when an NGO proposed a pilot project for an experiment to find out the possibility and suitability of immunocontraception drugs for Asian elephants. Immunocontraception has been tried in South Africa but the Supreme Court passed a restraining order in 2014.

Ever since, officials and ministers have occasionally talked about filing an appeal before the apex court to lift the restraining order by citing the increasing population of wild elephants.

Leopards and elephants are seen as major contributors to the human-wildlife conflict.

While a reliable leopard population estimation is yet to be made, Karnataka's elephant population stood at 6,013 as of last year, accounting for one fourth of the population in India (22,446).

The pachyderms account for the death of an average 30 people in Karnataka every year since 2010.

In Karnataka, the forest department has discussed the idea of sterilising leopards that are coming into conflict situations.

Animal birth control: Focus on elephants, leopards in conflict

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre's call for a discussion on wildlife birth control has brought to the fore the questions surrounding animal population control.

A senior official noted that though immunocontraception had been tested and proven as a humane intervention, which is reversible in three years, the Supreme Court's restraining order had made it difficult to initiate a pilot project.

Immunocontraception involves darting of female elephants with a vaccine that causes their immune system to produce antibodies that prevent fertilisation for three years. The findings of some studies that long-term (beyond three years) and repeated use of the vaccine may lead to permanent loss of fertility will need a robust ethical framework.

Another officer said even after getting clearances at every level, immunocontraception would not be used as a blanket measure."First, a scientific study will be conducted to identify the target individuals. The most likely candidates are those elephants in Hassan-Chikkamagaluru landscape, which live in coffee plantations and do not go to forests. However, even there, a highly cautious approach will be adopted," the officer added.

Sources said the matter was discussed at the recent meeting of the standing committee of the National Board for Wildlife. The committee decided to apprise the court about the changes in the elephant landscapes of India.

Sterilisation of leopards

In Karnataka, the wildlife wing holds also discussed the idea of sterilising leopards that are coming into conflict situations.

"Each year, about 150 to 200 leopards are rescued from conflicts. If we do not sterilise, the problem may get out of hand in the coming years," an official said.

The officer said any steps in that direction require necessary approvals from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, which in turn requires scientific evaluation of sterilisation.

Vance to head to Pak as fragile...

Ceasefire, From Page 1

The fate of Iran's missile and nuclear programmes — the elimination of which were major objectives for the US and Israel in going to war — also remained unclear.

Trump said the US would work with Iran to remove buried enriched uranium, though Iran did not confirm that.

In the streets of Tehran, pro-government demonstrators screamed: "Death to America, death to Israel, death to compromisers!" after the ceasefire announcement and burned American and Israeli flags.

The chants underscored the anger animating hard-liners, who have been preparing for what many assumed would be an apocalyptic battle with the United States.

Trump initially said Iran proposed a "workable" 10-point plan that could help end the war the US launched with Israel on Feb. 28.

But when a version in Farsi emerged that indicated Iran would be allowed to continue enriching uranium — which is key to building a nuclear weapon — Trump called it fraudulent without elaborating.

A US official said the 10-point ceasefire plan published by Iran is not the same set of conditions that were agreed to by the White House for pausing the war.

"The document being reported by media outlets is not the working framework," the senior official said on condition of anonymity.

Iran's demands for ending the war include a withdrawal of US combat forces from the region, the lifting of sanctions, and the release of its frozen assets.

In his post Wednesday, Trump said: "We are, and will be, talking Tariff and Sanctions relief with Iran."

GBA plans premium centres: Pay for faster services

GBA, From Page 1

The GBA — which has floated a tender — wants private agencies to quote the schedule of fees for services rendered. The lowest bidder wins the contract.

Under the proposed structure, a citizen seeking an e-khata may get it for an additional fee of Rs 1,000. Similarly, conversion of B khata to A khata or a new khata for a flat or plot with a building could cost Rs 2,500. For bulk transactions such as a developer seeking khatas for an entire multi-storey housing project, the charge could be Rs 1,500 per flat.

Officially, the civic body charges only Rs 125 for an e-khata, but not all have been "lucky" to get the service at that price. Some gullible citizens have paid anywhere from Rs 3,000 to a whopping Rs 60,000 for e-khata.

The GBA's Special Commissioner (Revenue), Munish Moudgil, told *DH* that the 'seva kendra' is one among the several reforms being introduced to streamline the services being provided to citizens. "We have already floated the tenders and the option to quote the fee per service has been left to the bidder," he said. "The entire processing of an application will be done under one roof. We will deploy our officers in each of these centres. No file will come out of it and so there is no delay," he said.

The initiative comes against the backdrop of the GBA's landmark e-khata programme, which involves digitising all 22 lakh property records in Bengaluru. However, the programme came with challenges as revenue officers rejected several applications or sat on them without a valid reason. Even though senior officials in the GBA came up with several reforms, rejections continue to burden the applicants.

Moudgil said citizens can avail the service directly from the corporations too. "We hope to onboard the private agency in a month's time. By June or July, the seva kendras should be up and running."

EC vs TMC: CEC said 'get lost', MP accused of 'shouting'

EC vs TMC, From Page 1

In an X post, the poll panel said, "ECI's straight-talk to Trinamool Congress. This time, the elections in West Bengal would surely be: fear-free, violence-free, intimidation-free, inducement-free and without any 'chappa', booth jamming and source jamming." Replying to this, Gokhale said, "Does this criminal CEC have the guts to tweet saying 'straight talk to BJP?"

O'Brien dared the EC to release the video or transcript of the meeting. "Gyanesh Kumar, you don't know who you are playing games with... None of what the CEC has said to the media is true; he did not say anything that he claims he did. Unless, of course, he was talking to himself," he said.

EC sources said O'Brien "shouted" at the CEC and two Election Commissioners, Vivek Joshi and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and asked Kumar not to speak, adding that the CEC requested O'Brien to maintain decorum and that shouting and indecent behaviour were not appropriate.

Trinamool sources said as soon as the delegation entered, the CEC pointed out that the party's authorised representative is not with them, to which O'Brien responded that the letter by the authorised person has mentioned that four people would be coming and if he felt they are unauthorised, they could walkout.

However, the meeting went ahead, during which the delegation handed over the memorandum as well as letters written by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to Kumar.

Sources said O'Brien then went on to say that they live in the hope that there would be a free and fair election.

KODAGU INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, MADIKERI
(Government of Karnataka - Autonomous Institution)
Phone: 08272 298220 Website: www.kimskodagu.karnataka.gov.in
Ref:No.DME/2026-27/IND2226: Date: 07.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Under signed Invites e-tender notification in two Bid system from eligible tenderrers through e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in GOK**, for **SUPPLY OF LABORATORY CHEMICALS AND CONSUMABLES TO Blood Bank and Pathology Department KoIMS Teaching Hospital Madikeri.** Last date for upload is **22.04.2026,** For more information contact e-procurement portal or office of the undersigned.

Director & Dean, KoIMS, Madikeri

Govt of Karnataka
Office of Deputy Conservator of Forests Social Forestry Division, Chitradurga
Pho No: 08194-220130 E-mail: dcfsfcta@gmail.com
No: A2.SFD.CTA.Out.E-T/CR/2025-26 Dated:01-04-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender Notifications For the financial year 2026-27Chitradurga Social Forestry Division and its under Range offices reg the supply of DEO, Literate Assistant, Driver, D Group employees on basis of Outsource for Total Rs. 72.74 Lakhs has been published. The last date to apply for tender is- 16-04-2026 evening 4:00 pm towards. And re-tender last date & time to apply is 29-04-2025 afternoon 4:00 pm for more information visit www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

RO.No.15:DIPR/ CTA/KSMCA/ 2026-27

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests And Technical Assistant Social Forestry Division, Chitradurga

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No. CGM(Tech)/DGM(Proc& APCC)/EE-P/AEE-2/2026-27/120-127 Date:08.04.2026

BRIEF SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (RE-TENDER) (Through KPPP mode only)

KPTCL re-invites Bids on electric mode against the following Tender Enquiry No. as detailed below:

Tender Enquiry Number and Description

KPTCL/2026-27/IND0296

Design, manufacture, testing, supply and installation/ demonstration of **01 set of Insulated Aerial Work Platform mounted on a vehicle and Insulated Scaffolding System** along with Sky Ladder vehicle, Tools Transportation vehicle and other Hotline tools (Total: 138 items) for live maintenance of Transmission Lines & sub-stations upto 400kV voltage class required at Hotline sub-division, KPTCL, Shivamogga conforming to KPTCL technical specification along with **Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for a period of five (05) years.**

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 10.04.2026 at 15.00 hrs.** and the Last date & time for receipt of bids in e-portal is **27.04.2026 at 15:00 hrs.** Any extension of due date for bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the bids.

Sd/- Chief General Manager (Tech), KPTCL, Corporate Office, 11th Floor, Indhana Bhavan, A.R. Circle Bengaluru-09

IN THE COURT OF THE LXXXII ADDL.CITY CIVIL JUDGE (CCH-83) AT BENGALURU
COM.EX. No.: 1039/2025
Between:
M/S Karnataka State Industrial And Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited,
Khanija Bhavan, 4th Floor, East Wing, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560 001
....DECREE-HOLDER
AND
SRI. DILIPKUMAR .A. AND OTHERS.
....JUDGMENT-DEBTORS
NOTICES TO JUDGMENT-DEBTORS NO. 2, 3, 4 AND 5.
2. Sri. ASHOK BALSARA.,
S/o Sri. Late N D Balsara, Aged about 55 years, No.34, 2nd Cross, Ganganagar, Bellary Road, Bengaluru-560 032
3. Smt. SHAKUNTALA BALSARA,
W/o Sri. Late N D Balasara, Aged about 75 years, No.34, 2nd Cross, Ganganagar, Bellary Road, Bengaluru-560 032
4. Sri GAGAN KUMAR K N.,
S/o Late K V Nagaraju, R/at No. 36, 'Bandeppa Nilaya" Ground Floor, 5th Main Road, TATA Silk Farm, Bengaluru-560 004
5. Smt K.N. SHASHIKALA.,
W/o Sri. Late K.V. Nagaraju, R/at No.206, Rama Iyengar Road, V V Puram, Bengaluru-560 004
Whereas, the Petitioner above has filed above Execution Petition Under, Order 21 Rule 11 of the Civil Procedure Code, against the Judgment-Debtors for recovery of a sum of Rs.1139,06,42,206/- (Rupees One Thousand One hundred Thirty Nine Crores, Six Lakhs, Forty Two Thousand, Two Hundred Six only.) with future interest and costs, as you all being the guarantors/sureties for the loans are liable to pay the dues of the corporation as stated above.
You are hereby noticed to appear in this Court in person or by pleader duly instructed and able to answer material questions relating to the Petition or who shall be accompanied by some persons able to answer all such questions on the **4th day of June 2026 at 11.00 A.M.** in the forenoon to answer the claim before the City Civil and Sessions Judge, at Bengaluru.
Take notice that in default at your appearance on the date before mentioned, the petition will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Court this **07th day of April 2026.**

By Order of the Court Senior Sheristedar, Commercial Court Unit, City Civil Court, Bengaluru

Advocate for Decree-Holder:
Sri R.P. Hedge, B.Sc., LL.B (Spl)., Advocate ,
No.89, 1st Floor, Sampige Road, 3rd Cross, Mallwswaram, Bengaluru-560 003.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE, HAGARIBOMMANAHALLI-583212
No.AMD/APMC/HBH/Devt/Tender/01 /2026-27 Date:01-04-2026

E-Tender Notification

Agricultural Produced Market Committee Hagaribommanahalli invites E-tender sanction under the Auction Plan for the year 2025-26 for Development works. Registered Contractor under the Department of Public Works and Inland Water Transport Under KPTT Act 1999 Standard Tender Document Item wise to Execute the following protected Two Cover are invited separately through e-procurement. For more details Contact the Office or Phone No.08397-238248 and e-portal Help line No: 09240214000 or 09240214001 & visit Website http:// kppp.karnataka.gov.in

SLNO	Name of Works	Tender Amount	Remarks
1	APMC/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT920	78,10,929.99	AS KPPP PORTAL
2	APMC/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT931	22,28,293.25	AS KPPP PORTAL
3	APMC/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT943	2,72,053.43	AS KPPP PORTAL
4	APMC/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT921	15,51,292.08	AS KPPP PORTAL

Time Schedule: 1.Open for Schedule-B Documents in Website:**04-04-2026 At 11.00 am**
2.Last Date for submission the Tender documents **21-04-2026 At 4.00 pm**
3.Opening of Technical Bid **24-04-2026 At 11.00 am**
4.Opening of Financial Bid **06-05-2026 At 4.30 pm**

Sd/-Secretary, A.P.M.C. H.B.Halli | DIPR/Vijayanagar/2026-27/ KSMCA/RO No/15 | **Sd/-Administrator., A.P.M.C. H.B.Halli**

North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation
Civil Engineering Department, Central Office, HUBBALLI.
NWKT/EE/HBL/DB(T)/15 /2026-27. Date: 08-04-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK kppp platform https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

Lumsum rate tender in Two cover system through GOK kppp portal for the following works as per Karnataka Transparency act in Public Procurement ordinance of 2000 is invited from the reputed project management Consultancy (Third party inspection) firms / agencies registered in Government Registering Authorities for carrying out Third Party inspection. Intending consultants/firms can obtain the tender details through web site **(https:/kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** & up load the duly completed tenders/relevant documents as prescribed in NIT, which has been published on **08.04.2026** within the stipulated date and time & tender shall be submitted through kppp portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** only.

Tender Indent No.	Name of work	EMD (in Rupees)	Stipulated Time	Last date & time for submission of tender
NWKRTC/2025-26/SE2617	Third party inspection services for the work of Improvement works to Depot at Dharwad	33,885/-	09 Months or till the completion of project.	23-04-2026 & 16.00hr
NWKRTC/2025-26/SE2245	Providing Third Party Inspection Services for the Work Of Construction of Assistant Regional Traffic office building at Honnavar.	21,045/-	09 Months or till the completion of project.	23-04-2026 & 16.00hr
NWKRTC/2025-26/SE2246	Third Party Inspection for the work of Construction of Automated Driving test track in Existing RTO Premises at Honnavar	24,636/-	09 Months or till the completion of project.	23-04-2026 & 16.00hr

For further details visit **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for any **"HELP"** regarding uploading of Tender Documents, please call on help desk **-+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777** or Call **0836-2332383.** Any changes in NIT, Corrigendum/Addendum will be published in kppp portal only, separate paper notification will not be issued.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, NWKRTC C.E. Department, Central Office Hubballi.

DIPR/DWD/38/2026-27/DESHPANDEPUBLICITY

KARNATAKA STATE POLICE HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
#59, Richmond Road (Gen K.S. Thimmaiah Road), Bengaluru-25. Ph: 080-25584102 / 25594893
Email: eecontractksphc@gmail.com Website: www.ksphc.org

No: EE/KSPH&IDCL/CNT/TND/02/2026-27/03/79 Date: 08.04.2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

KSPH & IDCL invites online tender as per KTPP 2000 Act & as per Standard Tender Document through KPPP **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the below works.

01 Construction of 24 PC Qtrs. at Muddebihal in Vijayapura District.
02 Providing GS Sheet roofing for COP office building in Belagavi.
03 Construction of New Sub-jail at Sedam in Kalaburagi District (50 inmates capacity).

Interested eligible contractors may participate in the tendering process. The details such as Tender fee, EMD, Tender documents etc., are available on KPPP from **10.04.2026 onwards.**

"KSPH & IDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without assigning any reasons."

Note: Henceforth any changes / modifications in the Tender will be updated only on KPPP.

DIPR/CP/YC/113/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer - Contracts

Bangalore West City Corporation
Office of the Executive Engineer Traffic Engineering Cell Zone 1, Jawaregowdana Doddi Main Road, DWC Center, Ramco Layout, RR Nagar, Bengaluru -560 098 e-mail: bwccqaqceezl@gmail.com

No: EE/BWCC/TE C/TEND/06/2026-27 Date: 04.04.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)
(Two cover system) (Through GOK KPPP only)

The Executive Engineer, Traffic Engineering Cell Zone 1(BWCC), invites tender on behalf of the Commissioner, BWCC, invites proposals (Technical and Financial) for appointing consultant for preparation of Detailed Feasibility Report for the Service detailed in the table below:

Sl.No.	Description of Service
1	Consultancy services for Preparation of Detailed Feasibility Report for the Work Construction of Foot Over Bridge at 16 locations in Bengaluru West City Corporation Limits under PPP model on DBFOT Basis. EMD (In.Rs): **50,000.00.**

Calendar of events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **09.04.2026. (2)** Last Date & Time for Queries (only Through online): **15.04.2026 at 15:00 Hrs. (3)** Date and time of per-bid meeting: **18.04.2026 at 15:00 Hrs. (4)** Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders: **27.04.2026 at 16:30 Hrs. (5)** Opening of Technical bid: **29.04.2026 at 16:40 Hrs. (6)** Opening of Financial bid (If Possible): **After the approval of Technical Elevation.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Traffic Engineering Cell Zone - 1
Bengaluru West City Corporation

The Mamata govt has worked to snatch the land rights of the people of West Bengal and give those away to the infiltrators, changing the state's demography

Poll vault

Rare respect
Candidates of rival parties exchanging pleasantries when they come face-to-face is a common sight during elections. But the AIADMK candidate in Gummudipoondi, V Sudhakar, stunned everyone when he fell at the feet of his DMK opponent, TJ Govindarajan, as they arrived to file their nomination papers. Since, Sudhakar is much younger than Govindarajan, he touched his feet and sought his blessings for victory. Taken aback by the sudden gesture, the DMK MLA blessed him and then left the scene.

ETB SIVAPRIYAN, CHENNAI

Protest paused
It would have been a baptism by fire in politics for Menaka Guruswamy, the Trinamool's newly elected Rajya Sabha MP, had the Election Commission not granted the party an appointment for a meeting on Wednesday. Guruswamy had taken her oath only on Monday, and by the next day, her party was preparing for an overnight dharna outside the EC office to demand a meeting over the deletion of 27 lakh voters, even after adjudication during the SIR. She would have had company from Derek O'Brien, Sagarika Ghose and Saket Gokhale at the protest, but the EC's communication on Tuesday made it easier for TMC leaders. One of the MPs had even carried blankets, anticipating that the EC might not give them an appointment.

SHEMIN JOY, NEW DELHI

Meet the leader

MK Stalin
DMK
Kolathur

For Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin, the April 23 electoral contest is more than just an acid test. If he leads the DMK to victory, he will secure a place in history by bringing the party back to power for a second consecutive term, the first time since 1971. He would also become the first DMK Chief Minister to return to power for a straight term after completing a full five-year tenure.

Stalin, who learned politics under the guidance of his father M Karunanidhi, has kept the DMK-led alliance intact for over eight years. The Secular Progressive Alliance has won every General Election since 2019 and has now been further strengthened to face the 2026 battle.

This time, however, Stalin had to burn the midnight oil to resolve differences among allies.

A graduate of the prestigious Presidency College, Stalin entered politics during his college days and spent a year in jail during the 1975 Emergency.

Despite being Karunanidhi's son, Stalin had to wait for his turn. He was appointed a minister only in his fourth term as an MLA in 2006 and became deputy CM in 2009.

Unlike many others, he had to contend with challenges within his own family, his elder brother MK Alagiri opposed his rise, to climb the DMK ladder.

Stalin gained prominence as the Mayor of Chennai (1996–2002), credited with building numerous flyovers that reshaped the city.

He lost his first election in 1984 from Thousand Lights but won from the same seat in 1989, 1996, 2001, and 2006. In 2011, he shifted to Kolathur and has remained undefeated since.

Trivia
During the 1951 elections, polling parties in Assam's hilly areas had to march on foot for days through virgin, trackless forests to reach polling stations. To ensure that no one lost their way, advance parties were sent ahead to mark the shortest routes to polling stations on wayside tree trunks along the route, guiding the polling teams.

To win Bengal, BJP zeroes in on seats TMC won by a thin margin

Saffron party's 170-seat target hinges on narrow-margin wins, not spreading itself thin

SUMIT PANDE
DHNS

As it mounted yet another campaign against Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress in West Bengal, the BJP has gone back to the drawing board to factor in the state's demographic peculiarities to redraft its strategy and prioritise allocation of resources towards seats that are more likely to flip.

The recalibrated target of 170 seats set by Union Home Minister Amit Shah indicates the BJP may be focusing on constituencies where it has crossed a threshold to convert votes into seats to breach the halfway mark in the House of 294 seats.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP led in 92 Assembly segments across the state, winning 12 parliamentary constituencies by polling 7% votes less than the ruling Trinamool Congress.

Of these 92 segments, the saffron party has been consistently performing well in 55 constituencies, where it has been winning or leading since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

A bunch of these constituencies are clustered in north Bengal, while the remaining are spread across the Purulia-Bankura belt west of Kolkata. The BJP has also made inroads into the Matua community-dominated Nadia and North 24 Parganas districts. An optimal performance in its strongholds can, at best, take the BJP closer to the three-digit tally, which is still well short of the halfway mark.

To raise its numbers further, the party will have to break new ground in regions dominated by the TMC. Within this batch, the BJP has identified another 70 seats where it trailed by a narrow margin in the last Lok Sabha polls, and where the probability of achieving a favourable outcome is relatively higher.

Moreover, the saffron outfit is also hopeful of making inroads into urban and semi-urban centres, especially municipalities contiguous to Kolkata and Howrah, and parts of South and North 24 Parganas, where issues like the RG Kar rape case and unemployment resonate strongly with the electorate.

The challenge for the BJP, as always, remains its near-total rout in the Muslim-dominated districts of Murshidabad, Malda and Uttar Dinajpur, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, Purba Bardhaman and Howrah.

The state has more than 30% Muslim population and the community influences close to 125 seats here, out of which the Trinamool has been consistently winning in over 100.

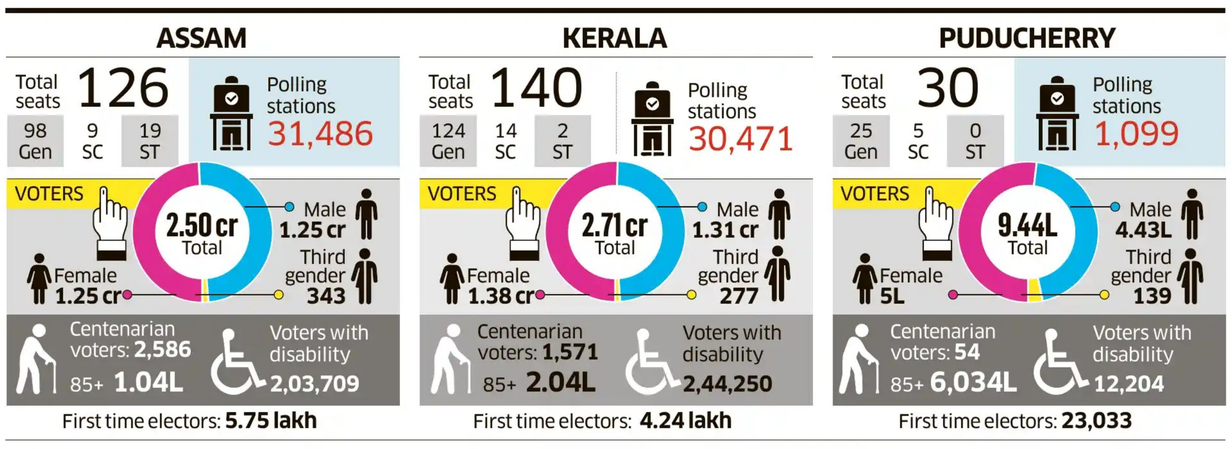
Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM has joined hands with former TMC Minister Humayun Kabir to queer the pitch in Muslim-dominated areas. A split in Muslim votes in some pockets between the Trinamool, Congress, the Left and candidates supported by the Owaisi-Kabir alliance could help some BJP candidates sneak through in a multi-cornered contest.

Otherwise, the BJP does not seem inclined to spend resources in constituencies with more than 50% Muslim population and where it has been losing by wide margins.

The objective is primarily to focus on winnable seats rather than spread oneself thin. In other words, the aim is to register a high strike rate in closely contested seats. Winning more seats with a narrow margin, even if it were to lose in weak constituencies by a big margin, offers the BJP a higher probability of getting closer to the magic number.

BJP leader Sukanta Majumdar campaigns for the party candidate from Balurghat constituency, Bidyut Roy, in Dakshin Dinajpur, on Wednesday. PTI

BALANCING ACT
- BJP to focus on 70 seats where it trailed narrowly in last Lok Sabha polls
- Slim victories matter more than defeats with wide margins
- Party to focus on urban and semi-urban areas
- To avoid Muslim-dominated seats with heavy losses



296 seats at stake as Assam, Kerala & Puducherry head to polls

Identity clash in Assam; LDF seeks third term in Kerala; triangular contest in Puducherry

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/ GUWAHATI/CHENNAI, DHNS

Voters in Assam, Kerala and Puducherry will cast their ballots on Thursday in single-phase Assembly elections across 296 constituencies in the two states and the Union Territory.

Polling for 140 seats in Kerala, 126 in Assam and 30 in Puducherry follows high-voltage campaigns marked by sharp rhetoric and personal attacks that ended on Tuesday.

In Assam, 722 candidates are in the fray, with the ruling BJP led by Chief Minister Himant Biswa Sarma and the Opposition Congress framing it as a "clash of identity". The main battle is expected between the BJP and its allies Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and Bodoland People's Front (BPF), and the Congress-led front of six Opposition parties. The Opposition camp also includes Raijor Dal and Assam Jatiya Parishad, two regional outfits seeking to make their mark in state politics.

In Kerala, which has 2.71 crore voters, it is a direct contest between the ruling CPM-led Left Democratic Front and the Opposition Congress-led United Democratic Front in most seats. The BJP-led NDA is pinning high hopes on at least 10 constituencies, making it a three-cornered contest.

An estimated 9.44 lakh voters are eligible to exercise their franchise in Puducherry, where the contest has turned triangular between the ruling NDA, the Congress-DMK alliance and newcomer Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) led by actor Vijay.

In Assam, for the BJP, the fight centres on the perceived threat from Muslim migrants from Bangladesh. The Congress, on the other hand, claims that a vote for them would help restore 'Bor Axom' (Greater Assam) of unity and secularism.

A polling official checks an EVM at a distribution centre in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday. PTI

Eyes will also be on Maulana Badruddin Ajmal's AIUDF, contesting alone after a long gap. The NDA ally UPPL too is fighting independently in all 15 seats of the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts.

In Kerala, voter mood may hinge on anti-incumbency against the decade-long LDF rule, the Sabarimala women's entry row, the gold heist case, FCRA amendment moves, allegations of authoritarian governance by CM Pinarayi Vijayan, CPM infighting with rebel candidates, Congress' top-heavy leadership, and the BJP's campaign against the LDF-UDF duopoly.

The UDF is pinning hopes on returning to power in Kerala after 10 years, while the LDF is seeking a third term by showcasing development initiatives and extensive public-relations efforts to boost the government's image.

Of the 30,495 polling booths in the state, around 2,040 have been identified as sensitive. Prohibitory orders were imposed in these areas, and many potential troublemakers were taken into preventive custody.

In Puducherry, the Thursday contest will decide whether the AINRC-BJP can retain the outgoing government's welfare edge or the Congress-DMK alliance can capitalise on anti-incumbency. Or will the TVK from neighbouring Tamil Nadu spring a surprise?

Farmer-activist Arul to take on DMK minister

ETB SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Arul Arumugam, who ventured into farming after quitting his job at a software firm, gained prominence during the vociferous protests against the Salem-Chennai Expressway in 2018. Three years later, Arumugam campaigned for DMK in the 2021 Assembly elections after it promised to scrap the expressway, which was to cut through thousands of acres of farm and forest lands, and mountains, spread across more than 150 villages.

Arul Arumugam

However, in 2023, Arul and six farmers were arrested by the DMK government under the Goondas Act merely for protesting against its decision to acquire 3,174 acres of fertile land for building an industrial estate in Tiruvannamalai district.

It is alleged that Highways Minister E V Velu, one of the most powerful in the DMK administration, was behind the invoking of the stringent act. While the Goondas Act against farmers was revoked immediately following public outrage, Arul spent 68 days in jail.

This April 23 election, Arul will face Velu in the high-stakes battle for Tiruvannamalai Assembly constituency as the candidate of the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK). Arul believes the work his outfit Uzhavar Urimai Iyakkam has done among farmers and the "groundswell" for TVK in the region could help him challenge the minister.

Velu, a multi-millionaire who owns an array of educational institutions and businesses, is a strongman in Tiruvannamalai district, having won from the temple town since 2011 and representing Thandarambattu thrice in the past.

"I stand here to challenge Velu's decision to detain innocent farmers under Goondas act. It was nothing but an abuse of power and the height of arrogance. We want to show that if farmers come together, we can defeat Velu from his home turf," Arul told *DH*.

"Our only crime was opposing the government's acquisition of our own land. Of the 3,174 acres, about 2,800 acres are fertile land where we cultivate for three seasons a year. Velu ordered our detention under the Goondas Act. We are not against any government, but against acquiring fertile land," he added.

After his release in November 2023 following the revocation of the Goondas Act, Arul was arrested again in December 2025 along with 22 members of his outfit for protesting against illegal sand mining in Malappambadi lake to prepare infrastructure for a meeting of the ruling DMK organised by Velu in his capacity as the district minister.

Tamil Nadu: Key promises & expected expenditure

DMK
One-time schemes
- Rs 8,000 coupons for women to buy electronic appliances
- Laptops for college students

Direct Benefit Transfers
- Rs 2,000 monthly aid for women
- Rs 1,500 monthly aid for students in govt colleges

Old Age Pension
- Rs 2,000 for over 29L people

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST: Rs 57,804 Cr

AIADMK
One-time schemes
- Refrigerators for ration card holders

Direct Benefit Transfers
- Rs 2,000 monthly aid for women
- 3 free LPG cylinders for ration card holders

Old Age Pension
- Rs 2,000 for over 29L people

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST: Rs 83,092 Cr

TVK
One-time schemes
- Marriage assistance of 8-gram gold and saree
- Gold ring for newborn girls

Direct Benefit Transfers
- Monthly aid for women under 60
- 6 free LPG cylinders per family per year

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST: Rs 1,10,304 Cr

ROOTING FOR CULTURE

Our voters prefer single-engine sarkar: PTR

PTR Palanivel Thiaga Rajan made his political debut by winning the Madurai (Central) Assembly constituency in 2016. He retained the seat in 2021 and was allotted the important finance portfolio when DMK came back to power. He is currently the IT minister and seeking re-election from the same seat. In an interview with *DH*'s **ETB Sivapriyan**, the minister spoke about the BJP's double-engine sarkar pitch, Tamil Nadu's overall development and the entry of actor Vijay into politics.

Chief Minister MK Stalin has projected the 2026 elections as Tamil Nadu versus NDA. Do you think it is justified?
I think the biggest issue is that the government now in its third term in New Delhi has started acting as if the mandate is for them to be rulers, rather than elected people. They withhold funds extra-constitutionally and extra-statutorily, and they also use the governors to thwart the intent of the elected legislature and government. The National Education Policy 2020, which was not even legislated in Parliament, is being forced as the benchmark to adhere to.

It is beyond any reasonable human being's argument that there is a tendency to create a new emperor and an empire out of Delhi. They want to suppress everyone and they are the homogenisers... Therefore, the CM says this is about fighting to retain self-governance and some measure of autonomy for our state and identity of our culture.

PM Narendra Modi says Tamil Nadu needs a double-engine sarkar. What is your opinion?
If you allow them (BJP) and their coalition partners (AIADMK) to rule, they will do what they have done in other states, which is to eventually homogenise the state... We care about distinctiveness because we are Tamil people and we want to retain our language, our culture and our way of life.

We want to keep the double-digit growth that we are seeing in Tamil Nadu that no double-engine state has been able to achieve.

We want our way of life, our language, our culture, and the legacy of our forefathers to be preserved.

Are you saying that Tamil Nadu does not need a double-engine sarkar?
A single engine is enough for Tamil Nadu because their (BJP's) double engines are not producing what our single engine is producing. The double engines, with all the favouritism, money, conducive governors and all kinds of support are not producing what the single engine is (doing in Tamil Nadu). We don't want their model. Our voters prefer single-engine sarkar.

Scan QR code to watch interview

Both DMK and AIADMK have not shared power with allies in Tamil Nadu. But when sharing power at the Centre, you seek plum portfolios. What explains this position?
The core tenant of our philosophy is *Maanilathil Suyaatchi; Madhiyil Kootatchi* (Autonomy in the state; Federalism at the Centre). It is the nature of the Constitution that states have very little power and the Union has all power. History has taught us that whenever there were coalition governments in Delhi, the economic and social outcomes have been better. It is simply mathematics and structure of the administration.

What is your assessment of actor Vijay's entry into politics?
I am one of those few people who don't watch many movies. So, I'm not able to gauge his actor role. But as a citizen of a democratic republic, and as somebody who believes in a functioning democracy being the best way of government, I welcome and encourage all entrants into the public debate and the public sphere.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

In Bengal, a worrying voter purge

West Bengal has witnessed a serious miscarriage of electoral justice under the Election Commission of India (ECI), disenfranchising lakhs of voters in the poll-bound state. The Commission adjudicated the credentials of about six million voters as part of its controversial Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls; 45% – more than 27 lakh people – were found ineligible to vote. The highest number of voter deletions has been reported in the state's Muslim-majority districts. Names of people who voted in earlier elections have been deleted in large numbers. About 91 lakh names were deleted from the state's voter list since the SIR process commenced, shrinking the electorate by about 12%, from 7.66 crore in October 2025 to 6.75 crore now. It is disconcerting that voting, a constitutional right with universal application in the country, is under threat now. This is a critical point in India's electoral system – its biggest ever challenge, ironically posed by its custodian agency.

The ECI's voter list revision in other states was also contentious and met opposition over procedural discrepancies. Proactive interventions by the Supreme Court helped resolve many of these issues. The roll revisions in these states appear to have set the tone for the exercise in West Bengal, which is on the run-up to a high-stakes election. In Bihar, the apex court forced the Commission to be transparent with the data on exclusions in the rolls. However, in West Bengal, the revision involved more complicated procedures, pushing millions into adjudication, where even minor discrepancies and mismatches were held against the voter. The responsibility for proving eligibility was passed on to the voter in a system known for poor documentation, protracted procedures, and official lethargy, within a narrow window for corrections.

The exclusion of millions from the electoral rolls raises serious questions about rights and fair representation

The Supreme Court rejected the plea to delay the freezing of the electoral rolls to provide a chance for the excluded 27 lakh voters to vote. It said the appellate tribunals would decide on pending appeals against the deletions. This will entail a long process of redress that is yet to gather pace – the elections are scheduled in two phases, on April 23 and 29. The absence of lakhs of voters from the rolls can potentially influence the electoral outcome. An election conducted after such a large-scale exclusion cannot be fair or credible. The onus is on the Court to intervene and reset the system, again, and enable every citizen to exercise their democratic right.

No honour in vanity degrees

Former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai's decision to decline an honorary doctorate from Haveri University is a rare assertion of principle in a system that has steadily devalued academic honours. His reasoning is clear: public service is not a credential to be decorated, and honorary doctorates must be reserved for exceptional, lifelong contributions in a defined field. Such restraint stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing culture across Karnataka's universities, where honorary doctorates are handed out with troubling ease. Institutions that ought to be citadels of scholarship have, in effect, turned into dispensing counters often rewarding proximity and patronage over real merit. The Karnataka State Universities Act permits such degrees only in "exceptional cases" of "eminent attainment" or "conspicuous service," and not as a matter of course.

However, recent events point to a collapse of this meritocracy. At the Karnataka State Open University, the unilateral finalisation of eight names by the Vice-Chancellor triggered a boycott of the convocation by some members of the Board of Management. At the Mangaluru University, an inflated list was forwarded to the Chancellor, bypassing the Syndicate. Honorary doctorates are now distributed as institutional largesse to actors, hoteliers, businessmen, seers, and politicians, with little evidence of rigorous scrutiny. The practice of conferring awards in bulk has reduced universities to doctorate-churning factories, stripping the honour of both meaning and value. Vice-chancellors using these titles to gain proximity to power are not aberrations but symptoms of a deeper malaise. Worse, this casual proliferation actively undermines those who have earned their doctorates through years of painstaking research, intellectual rigour, and peer review. The obsession with these honours is driven largely by the allure of the "Dr" prefix. While there is no explicit legal bar in India, the University Grants Commission is categorical that an honorary degree is a distinction, not an academic qualification. In the United Kingdom and the United States, recipients rarely use the title in professional contexts.

The proliferation of honorary doctorates in Karnataka necessitates standardised criteria and stricter scrutiny

The Governor and Chancellor, Thaawarchand Gehlot, remains the ultimate gatekeeper. While he has occasionally exercised restraint, the system remains porous and demands far firmer oversight. In this context, Higher Education Minister M C Sudhakar's proposal to constitute an expert committee to frame uniform guidelines is both timely and necessary. Standardised criteria, transparent evaluation, and independent scrutiny can restore credibility to a system that is perilously close to being trivialised. A doctorate should be a testament to rigorous intellectual labour or a lifetime of selfless service, not a vanity plate for the well-connected.

NO GUARANTEES

War exposes cracks in US cover for allies

A defiant Iran strains the US's security architecture, forcing its allies to rethink their reliance on Washington

VIVEK MISHRA AND AKSHAT SINGH

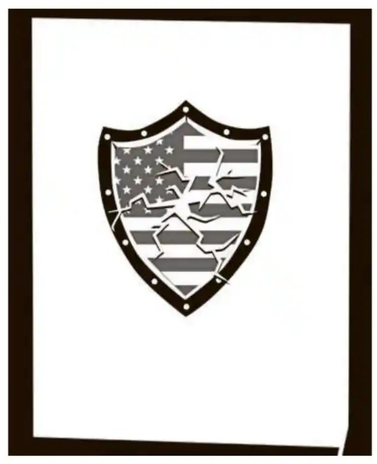
As the United States, Israel-Iran war reaches a delicate two-week ceasefire, the conflict seems postponed, at best. While Donald Trump neared an unprecedented rhetoric of 'a whole civilisation will die,' Iran has promised retaliation. The next two weeks will be critical because the current ceasefire allows both sides to return with some pride, and more importantly, with continued strength. One of the strongest post-war thoughts could be the limits of America's extended security architecture for its partners and allies.

The war escalated dramatically, with both sides targeting critical infrastructure and crossing new red lines each day. While Iran has suffered massive damage to its assets, the US too has suffered from retaliatory strikes, with its military infrastructure across the region coming under sustained Iranian attack. Gulf countries, meanwhile, have found themselves in the crosshairs. The scale and intensity of the Iranian retaliation exposed the limits of both extended deterrence and defence arrangements as security guarantees. On the economic side, Washington's inability to protect civilian, critical, and military infrastructure risks undermining the perception of the Gulf as a safe hub for global business and investment. The trajectory of the war points to a post-conflict reckoning: a recalibration among US allies, as they reassess their strategic dependence on American security assurances.

One of the defining features of the US-led post-World War II order was its network of security alliances, including NATO in Europe and bilateral (military and economic) ties with Japan and South Korea in Asia. Close partnerships with Gulf States such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, and Qatar provided similar frameworks in West Asia. The logic was straightforward: the US provided security guarantees, while its allies aligned with a US-led liberal economic and political order. This security bargain was closely tied to an economic *quid pro quo*. For long, the Gulf proved America's main energy mainstay. For Europe, America's guarantee enabled a focus on post-war economic reconstruction without worrying about external threats.

For decades, the alliances worked well with relative stability, albeit with little friction. Trump's return to office has placed these alliances under severe strain. The President has viewed US security commitments as a disproportionate burden and wants to reduce Washington's share of allied defence responsibilities. His repeated criticism of NATO and pressure on partners to increase defence spending have unsettled long-standing transatlantic ties, leading to the Hague commitment. More broadly, his emphasis on burden-sharing and shifting, as highlighted in the National Security Strategy, reflects a recalibration of US alliance management.

Trump's transactional approach to foreign policy has pushed allies to re-



assess their security postures. Europe is now debating the reindustrialisation of its defence base. Japan has accelerated its defence spending plan to 2% of GDP by FY27, and 70% of South Korea's defence equipment is now domestically sourced. The shift is overdue, as regional allies have long outsourced their security to the US. Yet this transition is long-term. In the short to medium term, dependence on the US remains unavoidable for maintaining regional security challenges. It is here that the war with Iran has laid bare the fragility and limitations of US security guarantees.

Hard choices to make

The war has reaffirmed the US's military as the world's most advanced and sophisticated military force. Yet, the rapid depletion of advanced ammunition and interceptor missiles has exposed deeper structural limitations. The war in Ukraine has steadily depleted stockpiles, raising worries about a widening demand-supply gap. The subsequent escalation with Iran has brought these vulnerabilities into the spotlight. Iran's use of low-cost drones and missiles to target structures across the Gulf and beyond has strained US reserves of advanced air defence systems, pushing stockpiles to critical levels.

The emerging strain has had strategic consequences. To manage shortages, Washington has reportedly redeployed key systems from allies such as South Korea and the Philippines – moves that have raised concerns in Seoul and Manila about the credibility and reliability of US security commitments, particularly in the event of a regional contingency, especially against China.

For Gulf countries, the war has been a stark reminder of the risks inherent in their heavy reliance on the US security architecture. They have, first, been drawn into a conflict not of their choosing. Second, despite investing billions in advanced American defence systems, they remain vulnerable to sustained attacks, with additional support extended by European powers. The Iranian counterattack changes the risk threshold in the region, as any future US adventurism could invite a similar response. For the Gulf states, this warrants a rethink of their security posturing vis-à-vis the US.

The war has deepened existing fissures between the US and its European allies. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting spike in global oil prices prompted Washington to seek European assistance in reopening the passage and stabilising energy markets. The responses, from the UK, Germany, France, and Spain, however, have been uneven, ranging from outright reluctance to a cautious, calibrated willingness to assist when necessary. The positions taken by the UK, which is now leading a coalition of nearly 40 countries seeking a diplomatic solution to reopen the strait, point to divergences within the transatlantic alliance. European countries are learning to deal with a reticent Trump in a language he most resents: defiance.

The war in Iran poses tough questions for all the actors, both directly and indirectly involved. For the US under Trump, who has been pestering allies to take charge of their own security, constant U-turns over ending the war and opening the Strait of Hormuz, critical demand-supply gaps in defence assets, and the repurposing of military assets will turn the conversation on its head. For US allies, the stark realities of outsourcing security and self-reliance couldn't be more telling. Most strikingly, the questions about US security architecture will be hard to ignore, especially in an age of electronic and drone warfare.

(Vivek is Deputy Director, Strategic Studies Programme, Observer Research Foundation; Akshat was an intern at ORF)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Back to the paediatrician at 53

In the 1990s, general physicians were often a one-stop solution

T R SATHISH KUMAR

February 11, 2026—a Wednesday—will remain a memorable day. Seeing one's paediatrician after three and a half decades is no small thing. I had the privilege of accompanying my 16-year-old son to him for a consultation with him. In a sense, he has now been a physician to two generations in my family. His experience and wisdom are invaluable to both children and their parents.

The last time I visited him must have been around 1989 or 1990. I was not a frequent visitor to his clinic—then located near the railway underpass on KRS Road in Mysuru—largely because I did not have many health problems. Despite being natives of Pandavapura and residents of Mandya, we depended on Mysuru for most services, including healthcare.

Dr S N Mothi, a reputed and popular paediatrician, had once provided valuable advice and support to my sister, Kavitha, when she was in primary school. I do not recall the details of her illness, as I too was young then, but it involved a nephrological problem. Dr Mothi diagnosed it and advised her admission to the Mission Hospital (Mary Calvert Holdsworth Memorial Hospital), one of the few private hospitals in Mysuru at the time. She was hospitalised for over a month.

In those days, general physicians were often a one-stop solution for most health concerns. Specialisation existed but was rare. Consulting a paediatrician was considered something of a luxury—almost a mark of sophistication.

Recently, my son Shishir developed a skin-related problem, and his doctor suggested we consult an endocrinologist. However, endocrinologists are few in Mysuru and paediatric endocrinologists fewer still.

Over a conversation with adventure sports trainer D S D Solanki—Deepak to me—I asked if he knew of a good and *kifayati* (economical) endocrinologist. He mentioned a couple of names but suggested instead that I consult an experienced paediatrician like Dr Mothi.

I was surprised. Was he still practising? I had seen him at a few literary events. But I was unsure if he continued to see patients. As it turned out, Dr Mothi has treated two generations in Deepak's family as well.

The very next day, I was at his clinic. He was pleased to learn of our three-decade-old association. He enquired warmly about my parents and Shishir's education. His son, Dr Shyam Sarvodey, also a paediatrician, provided additional consultation to Shishir.

As we were winding up, Dr Shyam handed me a slip with an amount written on it and asked me to submit it at the reception. Assuming that I had to pay an additional fee—perhaps for a few tests that had been conducted—I reached for my wallet. The person at the counter asked if I had a particular denomination. Thinking this was a clever way to manage the perennial 'change' problem, I replied that I had a different amount.

"It's okay," she said, and before I could even open my wallet, she handed me some cash.

It was a pleasant surprise. For a moment, I wondered if it was some kind of a 'loyalty bonus' cash-back offer.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Temporary pause to a needless war

The temporary 15-day truce announced by the US and tacitly accepted by Iran after 40 days of war is a welcome step. While both sides appear to be claiming victory, there were no winners in this war: the US lost its reputation, and the war dented its economy considerably; it cost Iran in terms of loss of infrastructure and lives, including those of its top religious and military leadership. It is heartening that wiser counsels prevailed on both sides and the mass destruction, as announced by US President Donald Trump, did not happen. One hopes that the cessation of hostilities would continue beyond the period of 15 days, which would further lead to permanent peace in the region. It is reported that Pakistan's PM successfully played a mediatory role in convincing the two sides to lay down arms, and we must give the devil its due. The PM of Pakistan should be complimented for his peace efforts. The world will heave a collective sigh of relief as the Strait of Hormuz opens. It is also important to revitalise the role of the United Nations.
K R Jayaprakash Rao, Mysuru

Cautious relief

This has reference to the recent ceasefire between Iran and the US. After 40 days of war and escalation, the two-week ceasefire has brought some relief to the entire world, including India, especially in terms of stabilising oil and gas supplies. Whether this positive momentum will continue between the two countries, fostering mutual trust and understanding, remains to be seen.
K Ragavan, Bengaluru

Why fear debate?

The rejection of the motion moved by the opposition parties against the CEC by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, and the Speaker, Lok Sabha, is unjustified. The motion was likely to be defeated; the ruling alliance has a majority in both houses of Parliament. The debate would have helped bring facts out into the public domain and allowed the people to decide if and how the government is misusing the EC. Why is the government so reluctant to allow a debate?
V Padmanabhan, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Iran begged for a ceasefire...US achieved decisive military victory.

Pete Hegseth, US Secy of War

People never lie so much as after a hunt, during a war, or before an election.

Otto von Bismarck

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

The reality of self-employment

The rising number of MSMEs masks job distress; India's policy focus must shift to enterprise sustainability and outcomes

SHIKA SARAVANABHAVAN

The micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector has long been a key driver of the Indian economy, absorbing a substantial share of the workforce and contributing to around 30% of GDP. Recent data show a rise in self-employment, especially in the unincorporated sector. According to the latest Economic Survey, 58.4% of the workforce is self-employed, up from 52% in 2017–18. Unincorporated sector enterprises, meanwhile, have grown in number by 12.84% in 2024 over the previous year. While these trends reflect rising entrepreneurial activity, they are not entirely positive. For most Indians, self-employment remains a coping mechanism in the face of joblessness.

Many such enterprises, largely household-based, are engaged in low-investment, low-growth activities with little prospect of scaling up. The latest Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) shows that about 86% of non-agricultural enterprises are own-account units without hired workers – essentially single-worker, subsistence operations. The expansion of self-employment, therefore, signals less entrepreneurial dynamism and more an underlying weakness in the employment structure. This is not an argument against entrepreneurship but a call to recognise the reality of Indian self-employment and to build an ecosystem that enables subsistence activities, where feasible, to evolve into sustainable businesses.

Despite the necessity-driven nature of most enterprises, promoting entrepreneurship is still a pragmatic strategy for generating long-term employment, given India's limited capacity to absorb the workforce into formal jobs. Another concern is low female labour force participation, estimated at around 35.3% by the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2026. Here, entrepreneurship can play an enabling role. Women-led enterprises have grown in recent years, aided by the flexibility entrepreneurship offers compared to formal work.

Beyond credit

Successive Union budgets have expanded credit guarantees, start-up schemes, tax incentives and targeted MSME packages to encourage entrepreneurship. The 2026 Budget continues this emphasis, focusing on MSME growth in rural and semi-urban areas to foster more balanced regional economic development.

The problem, however, is that policy discussions remain heavily focused on credit and subsidies. Finance can ease entry barriers, but it is only part of the story. Growth and sustainability depend on a broader entrepreneurial ecosystem — institutional, regulatory, market, and physical conditions within which enterprises operate. These elements are interdependent; without coordination, enterprise quality is unlikely to improve. If credit is available but markets are fragmented, enterprises remain disconnected from buyers, suppliers and logistics networks. Production may rise, but without market access, it leads to stagnation and failure.

The same holds for physical infrastructure. Reliable electricity, for instance, remains uneven across regions. The average daily hours of power supply in rural Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are only 18.1 hours and 21.7 hours, respectively. Such interruptions are costly for small firms that cannot afford inverters or generator backup.

Government-funded programmes and schemes for the upgradation and growth of enterprises do exist, but there is a lack of awareness about them. Along with enabling programmes, knowledge networks deserve much greater policy attention. Thus, without these different elements of the ecosystem, additional credit can end up financing survival rather than enabling growth. Firms do not go out of business, but they subsist on borrowed money in low-productivity activities.

Though the direction of policy is largely appropriate, the focus must shift from expanding enterprise counts to improving enterprise outcomes. This requires strengthening the ecosystem so that necessity-driven entrepreneurship can evolve into viable businesses. At the same time, it is important to recognise that many of these enterprises will never experience high growth or scale. Even so, a meaningful share of the public resources and private effort devoted to promoting entrepreneurship should translate to stable and sustainable livelihoods.

As the American economist William Baumol argued, entrepreneurship will always exist; what matters is the nature of the entrepreneurship generated, whether it is productive or unproductive. This, in turn, depends on the ecosystem that shapes entrepreneurial behaviour. Policy must therefore move beyond loan disbursement targets, and enterprise counts towards improving the ecosystem. This will ultimately determine whether India's entrepreneurial push strengthens its long-term employment or merely eases short-term pressures.

(The writer is a senior research associate at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad)

Welfare's new colour: From rice politics to consumerist promises

DATELINE Chennai

E T B SIVAPRIYAN

Refrigerators, coupons worth Rs 8,000 to buy any household appliance, eight grams of gold with a silk sari for women at the time of marriage, and a gold ring for newborn girls – it is raining promises in Tamil Nadu as voters head to polling stations on April 23.

Except for Tamil nationalist Naam Tamizhar Katchi (NTK), every major player in the state – DMK, AIADMK, and even newcomer TVK – has promised cash transfers and welfare schemes if they come to power.

Tamil Nadu has been a welfare State since British times (then Madras), with the noon meal scheme introduced by the Justice Party government in 1925 to promote education. The scheme has undergone a massive transformation over the last century, with additions such as bananas, eggs, and a variety of rice dishes, and has been replicated across the country and even abroad.

The current DMK government went a step further by providing breakfast to about 19 lakh primary school students in government institutions. If re-elected, the DMK has promised to extend the scheme up to Class VIII, benefiting an additional 15 lakh students.

Successive governments focused on incentivising education by providing free bus passes and later bicycles for students to travel to nearby towns to pursue education, as well as distributing laptops to college students. They also invested in health infrastructure and poverty eradication.

All these were implemented in right earnest as investments in the future.

Rice, in fact, has been integral to Dravidian politics. DMK rode to power in 1967 on promises such as three measures of rice for one rupee, while Tamil Nadu remains the only state in India to follow a universal public distribution system (PDS).

After coming to power in 2006, Chief Minister M Karunanidhi provided 1 kg of rice for Rs 2, later reducing it to Rs 1. Since 2011, when J Jayalalithaa returned to power, 35 kg of rice has been distributed free for each family.

However, the DMK's promise of free colour television sets to poor households in 2006 – which later became a universal scheme – changed the nature of welfare, with Dravidian parties embracing consumerism. That no political party in the country is now immune to this culture is another story altogether.

Since then, mixer grinders, pedestal fans, and wet grinders have been distributed universally rather than in a targeted manner, imposing a heavy burden on the exchequer. Tamil Nadu's outstanding debt is expected to touch Rs 10.71 lakh crore by March 31, 2027, with nearly Rs 5 lakh crore borrowed by the DMK government between 2021 and 2026.

Implementing just a few of the key promises would cost the exchequer Rs 57,084 crore for the DMK, Rs 83,092 crore for the AIADMK and Rs 1,10,304 crore for the TVK. While the DMK's schemes have been more targeted since 2021 – though it faced criticism for not fulfilling its promise of monthly assistance to all women – the AIADMK's and TVK's promises are universal.

Schemes such as extending the breakfast scheme from Classes VI to VIII, free laptops to college students, and assistance to unemployed youth could be seen as investments in the future. However, the direct benefit transfers (DBTs), analysts say, must be disbursed only to deserving beneficiaries.

R Kannan, biographer of Dravidian leaders C N Annadurai and M G Ramachandran, told *DH* that Tamil Nadu has a rich history of welfare measures such as free cataract surgeries, footwear, saris and dhotis, and subsidised—later free—rice, all aimed at lifting people out of poverty.

But, he added, the tide turned in 2006 when the DMK promised colour television sets – a pivotal moment in the state's politics.

"The traction for colour TV sets prompted Jayalalithaa to promise mixer grinders, wet grinders, and pedestal fans, which proved equally attractive. Once parties embraced consumerism, voters went for it. Unfortunately, a freebie culture has taken root in Tamil Nadu," Kannan added. On DBT being targeted now, Kannan noted that politics in the state has become a no-holds-barred contest, with no foolproof mechanism to identify genuine beneficiaries.

However, Prof M Vijayabaskar of the Madras Institute of Development Studies told *DH* that DBTs are not unique to Tamil Nadu but have been a global phenomenon since the 1990s, preferred for two reasons.

"One, there are no leakages. Two, the idea of welfare through jobs took a big beating after 1991, when the neoliberal turn limited the ability of sub-national governments to strengthen welfare through quality jobs.

"It has become the responsibility of governments to ensure social security outside the workplace through such direct transfers. I don't think there is any other way unless things change," he said.

Vijayabaskar, however, pointed out that the distinction that one has to make in Tamil Nadu is that, unlike in other states, TN is not replacing one with the other.

While supporting people through direct transfers, the state is also investing heavily in public school infrastructure, improving learning outcomes, up-skilling students in tertiary education, incentivising government school students to pursue higher education, and investing in public health.

"This has to be seen, therefore, as layering rather than a mere replacement," he added. **DHNS**

President Trump's short-term intimidation may have worked, but the fundamental divides with Iran are as sharp as they were in February

DAVID E SANGER

A man stands in his destroyed apartment in a neighbourhood targeted by US-Israeli strikes in Tehran, Iran on Tuesday. A two-week ceasefire was announced after a war that has battered the global economy and devastated Iran. THE NEW YORK TIMES

Trump finds his off-ramp. But what of causes of Iran war?

At 8:06 am on Tuesday, President Donald Trump delivered an apocalyptic threat to Iran, declaring that unless his demand to open the Strait of Hormuz was fulfilled by nightfall, "a whole civilisation will die tonight, never to be brought back again."

Ten hours and 26 minutes later, at 6:32 pm Eastern time, he lifted the threat, for now. He said an intervention by the Pakistani government had led to a two-week ceasefire in a war that has wrecked the world economy and showed off US technological dominance and unexpected Iranian resilience.

Trump's tactic of escalating his rhetoric to astronomical levels certainly helped him find an off-ramp he had been seeking for weeks. That success alone may fuel his belief that the tactics he learned in the New York real estate world — ignore old conventions, make maximalist demands — works in geopolitics as well.

Without question, it was a down-to-the-wire tactical victory, one that should, at least temporarily, get oil, fertiliser and helium flowing again through the Strait of Hormuz, and calm markets that feared a global energy shock would lead to a global recession.

But it resolved none of the fundamental issues that led to the war.

It leaves a theocratic government, backed by the vicious Revolutionary Guard, in charge of a cowed population that has been pummelled by missiles and bombs, and finds itself still under the thumb of a familiar regime, even if under new management. It leaves Iran's nuclear stockpile in place, including the 970 pounds of near-bomb-grade material that was, in theory, the *casus belli* of this war.

It left Persian Gulf allies reeling, with the discovery that the glass skyscrapers of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and the desalination plants that make wealthy enclaves in Kuwait liveable can be taken out by Iranian missiles and drones. Gas prices have soared and are about to test Trump's promise that they will fall again to old levels as soon as the fighting stops.

And it has left Trump's political base fractured, with onetime supporters now accusing the president and his loyalists, starting with Vice President J D Vance, with violating their promise not to get America tied up in unwinnable wars in the Middle East.

It all happened at a moment when Iran has demonstrated that it can absorb 13,000 targeted strikes and still conduct an impressive asymmetric war, choking off oil supplies and sending its cyber army to attack US infrastructure.

Now Trump faces the challenge not only of reaching a more permanent settlement but proving to the United States and the world that this conflict was worth flighting in the first place. And to do so, he will have to demonstrate that he has removed Iran's death-grip on the 21-mile channel that makes up the strait, and its chances of ever building a nuclear weapon.

On that point there was an ominous-sounding element buried in the Iranian description of the deal. Shipping would proceed, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote, but under the control of "Iran's Armed Forces," who would determine who passes, and when.

"Iran remains in the control of the strait, which was not the case before the war," said Richard Fontaine, CEO of the Centre for a New American Security, a Washington think tank. "I find it hard to believe that the US and the world could accept a situation in which Iran remains in control of a key energy checkpoint indefinitely. That would be a materially worse outcome than existed before the war."

So might a final agreement. Four weeks ago, Trump was demanding Iran's "unconditional surrender," saying he would determine when the country had been defeated. On Tuesday evening, his tone was different. He agreed to base the next two weeks of talks on a 10-point plan Iran submitted to the Pakistanis. Trump called it "a workable basis on which to negotiate."

"Have you looked at Iran's plan?" Fontaine asked. "It reads like a Tehran wish list from before the war, calling for a global recognition of Iran's right to enrich uranium, the removal of all American forces from the region and a lifting of economic sanctions. And it calls for the payment of reparations to Iran for damage caused in the war."

Of course, that is just the starting point for negotiation. But the gap between the Iranian view of a final peace agreement and the U.S. view is so wide that imagining a settlement in two years, much less two weeks, requires some diplomatic jujitsu. It took 21/2 years for the Obama administration to negotiate the 2015 nuclear accord, which Trump dispensed with in 2018, and that was in peacetime. This negotiation will be held under the sword of a possible resumption of hostilities.

Presidents have been negotiating with Iran, sanctioning Iran and sabotaging Iran for 20 years. Now Trump faces the challenge of showing that warring with Iran achieves better results. It will not be easy.

If he fails to get the 970 pounds of 60% enriched uranium out of the country, along with far larger quantities of lower-enriched nuclear fuel, he will have accomplished less in the $1 billion-a-day war than President Barack Obama accomplished 11 years ago. In that agreement, Iran shipped 97% of its nuclear stockpile out of the country.

If he fails to win agreement that Iran will limit the size of its battered arsenal of missiles, or the distance they can travel, he will have fallen short on one of his top objectives.

And if his talks with a government led by the new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, who is believed to be recovering from injuries in the bombing that killed his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, end up cementing the new government's authority, he risks selling out the Iranian people.

It was only a little more than five weeks ago that Trump was urging the Iranian people to rise up and overthrow their government. Now he is doing business with that government. On Tuesday, he repeated his claim that the new supreme leader is part of a generation of "different, smarter, and less radicalised" leaders. U.S. intelligence agencies have their doubts.

"Maybe this will work out," said Fontaine, a former aide to the late Sen. John McCain. "But there is a chance that this ends with the US and the world in a worse situation than when it started."

Iran and US both claim victory

The United States and Iran announced a two-week ceasefire and plans to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday evening.

The agreement, brokered by Pakistan, was hailed as a victory by both sides. Trump said a 10-point plan from Iran was a "workable basis on which to negotiate" a lasting end to the war, after demanding Iran's "unconditional surrender" for weeks. Iranian officials were triumphant, with Mohammad Reza Aref, the country's first vice president, saying on social media that "the era of Iran" had begun after Trump failed to destroy the Islamic Republic's government. Iran also said the Strait of Hormuz would remain open while negotiations took place.

Shipping companies signalled that they were cautious about resuming transit through the strait immediately. Two bulk carriers crossed the waterway Wednesday, according to Kpler, a tracking company. A handful of ships have been observed crossing the strait each day since the war began. More than 400 tankers and other vessels remain "effectively stranded" in the Persian Gulf, Kpler said.

The ceasefire did not cover Israel's offensive against Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed militant group in Lebanon, the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement. Fresh Iranian attacks were reported in some Persian Gulf countries early Wednesday morning.

Highlighting the fragility of the truce, Iran's State media reported that an oil refinery on Lavan, an Iranian island in the Gulf, was struck around 10 am local time by unspecified "enemies." There were no reports of casualties, according to the State-run broadcaster.

Investors welcomed the ceasefire after weeks of war, which caused an energy crisis and turmoil for global markets. The price of oil tumbled Wednesday, with Brent crude, the international benchmark, down almost 15% to about $95 a barrel. Global stock markets soared.

The New York Times

Together, let's empower our Nari Shakti

NARENDRA MODI

In the coming days, India will be immersed in a festive season, with celebrations taking place across the length and breadth of the nation. The people of Assam will mark Rongali Bihu, while Odisha will celebrate Maha Bishuba Pana Sankranti. In West Bengal, Poila Boishakh will usher in the Bengali New Year, and in Kerala, Vishu will be observed with immense enthusiasm. In Tamil Nadu, Puthandu will be celebrated, while in Punjab and other parts of Northern India, it will be Baisakhi, which will usher in a spirit of hope as well as positivity. I convey my best wishes to all those across India and the world who are marking these festivals. May these auspicious occasions bring happiness and prosperity to everyone's lives.

On April 11, we will commence the 200th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Phule, and on April 14, India will pay homage to Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on Ambedkar Jayanti.

In addition to these special occasions, when the spirit of renewal fills our hearts and minds, our nation stands at the threshold of another historic occasion. It is an opportunity to deepen the foundations of our democracy and to reaffirm our collective commitment to equality and inclusion.

On April 16, Parliament will be convened to discuss and pass an important Bill that advances women's reservation. To describe this merely as a legislative exercise would be an understatement. It is a reflection of the aspirations of crores of women across India. It is an affirmation of a principle that has long guided our civilisational ethos, that society progresses when women progress.

Women constitute nearly half of India's population. Their contributions to our nation are vast and invaluable. Today, India is witnessing remarkable achievements by women across every field. From science and technology to entrepreneurship, from sports to the armed forces and from music to the arts, women are at the forefront of India's progress. Over the years, sustained efforts have been made to create an enabling environment for women's empowerment. Greater access to education, improved healthcare, enhanced financial inclusion and better access to basic amenities have strengthened the foundations of women's participation in economic and social life.

Yet, their representation in the world of politics and legislative bodies has not always been commensurate with their role in society. This is particularly unfortunate because when women participate in administration and decision-making, they bring with them experiences and insights that enrich public discourse and improve the quality of governance.

It is imperative that the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and the Assembly elections to the various states are conducted with women's reservation in place. Over the decades, there have been repeated efforts to provide women with their rightful place in democratic institutions by the previous governments. Committees were made, and bill drafts were introduced, but they never saw the light of day. But the broad consensus has remained that women's representation in legislative bodies has to increase. In September 2023, Parliament passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam. I consider it to be among the most special occasions of my life.

This opportunity to ensure women's reservation also resonates deeply with the spirit of our Constitution. The makers of our Constitution envisioned a society where equality is both enshrined and realised in practice. Strengthening women's participation in legislative institutions is an important step towards fulfilling that vision. It reflects our commitment to building a society where every citizen has an equal stake in shaping the nation's destiny.

This is a moment that cannot be deferred any longer. Every delay in advancing women's representation is, in effect, a delay in strengthening the quality and inclusiveness of our democracy. For decades, the need for greater participation of women in legislative institutions has been acknowledged, discussed and reaffirmed. To postpone action now would mean extending an imbalance that we already recognise and have the capacity to correct. At a time when India is moving forward with confidence and purpose, it is essential that our institutions reflect the aspirations of all citizens, especially those who form half our population. Timely action will not only honour our long-standing commitments but also ensure that the momentum of progress is sustained. This is truly a historic opportunity to make our democracy more representative, responsive and future-ready.

This moment calls for collective action. It is not about any one government, party or individual. It is about the nation as a whole recognising the importance of this step and coming together to realise it. It is what we owe to our Nari Shakti. That is why the passage of a bill for women's reservation should reflect the broadest possible consensus and be guided by the larger national interest.

(Read the full article @ deccanherald.com)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: APRIL 1976

MCF fertiliser released for marketing

Bangalore, April 8
Nine trucks carrying the first consignment of 100 tonnes of urea produced by the naphtha-based Mangalore Chemicals and Fertilisers Ltd, rolled out from Vidhana Soudha here today for marketing through distributors. At a simple commemoration function held here to mark the successful competition of the project, Agriculture Minister N. Chikke Gowda handed over three bags of "Mangala urea" to the representatives of distributors, on behalf of the chief minister who is in Delhi.

25 YEARS AGO: APRIL 2001

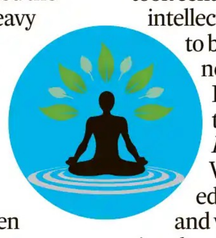
Root cause of corruption is greed: Vajpayee

Mumbai, Apr 8 (PTI)
Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today said the root cause of corruption was greed and called upon people to observe *sayyam* (control of desire) as professed by great Jain teacher Vardhaman Mahavir. Addressing the 2600th birth anniversary celebrations of Bhagwan Mahavir in central Mumbai, Mr Vajpayee said the Jain teacher's concept of *Aparigraha* (not to accumulate wealth more than what is required) was relevant even today as it was the only way to remove corruption.

OASIS | SRIPRIYA SATISH

When truth wears the mask of eccentricity

'Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion, for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric.' This quote by Bertrand Russell instantly brings to mind one of the greatest intellectual revelations in human history—the heliocentric theory proposed by Nicolas Copernicus, who asserted that the earth revolves around the sun. At the time, this idea was dismissed as absurd. The belief that Earth stood at the centre of the universe was deeply embedded in religious, philosophical, and social thinking. Copernicus' theory challenged not just science but also the religious views. What was once mocked as eccentricity was later validated through Galileo's telescopic observations and Johannes Kepler's mathematical laws of planetary motion. Galileo, who defended the heliocentric model, paid a heavy price for standing by truth. Condemned by the Catholic Church, he was punished not for being wrong—but for being ahead of his time. His persecution stands as a reminder that societies often resist ideas that threaten established beliefs.



Similarly, the ancient understanding that the earth is spherical—proposed by thinkers such as Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle—was once dismissed in favour of flat-earth notions. Today, this knowledge is taken for granted, but it took centuries of courage, reason, and intellectual persistence for such truths to be accepted. This pattern is not limited to Western history. Indian mythology, too, reflects the same timeless truth. In the *Ramayana*, Ravana's brother Vibhishana openly acknowledged the greatness of Rama and warned Ravana of the destruction that would follow the abduction of Sita. For speaking the truth, Vibhishana was exiled from Lanka. His loyalty to righteousness was ridiculed before it was recognised as wisdom. Even Sita's unwavering faith in Rama's rescue was mocked in Ravana's court. Truth, in both history and mythology, follows a recurring pattern: it is first ridiculed, then resisted, and finally revered.

Across cultures and centuries, those who spoke the truth endured rejection, punishment, and isolation. Yet time transformed them into true heroes. New ideas are the seeds of new realities. Great thoughts often appear irrational in their infancy state because they challenge the most prevalent notion. Eccentric ideas, when rooted in truth, do not remain eccentric forever. They become the future.

India withdraws bid to host UN climate summit in 2028

Decision follows review of the government's 2028 commitments

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India has withdrawn its bid to host the UN climate summit in 2028 (COP33) — announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi two years ago — and communicated the decision to the United Nations, sources said on Wednesday, without disclosing the reasons.

The Union Environment Ministry conveyed the government's decision to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change earlier this week, leaving the UN body with the difficult task of finding a new host for the 2028 edition of the annual global meet.

The Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC is the world's most important climate change summit, where countries develop strategies to curb global warming. The most recent edition (COP30) was held in Belém, Brazil. India has hosted it only once before — COP8 in Delhi in 2002.

In December 2023, Prime Minister Modi offered to host COP33 in India and received appreciation from global leaders.

Sources said a newly built conferencing venue in Delhi was being considered for the event, and a dedicated cell was set up in the Union Environment Ministry to coordinate with UN officials.

While sources did not elaborate on the reasons for the withdrawal, a report by a digital climate news platform said the decision was conveyed to the Asia-Pacific group in the UNFCCC through a letter, stating it was taken "following a review of the government's commitments for the year 2028".

Amitabh Kant, ex-Sherpa to G20 and former Chief Executive Officer of Niti Aayog, welcomed the decision.

"A sensible move. The developed world has not lived up to any of its commitments made at COP21 in Paris. COPs have been taken over by fossil fuel lobbyists. India withdraws bid to host COP33 climate talks," Kant said in a social media post.

The next two UN climate summits (COP31 and COP32) are scheduled to take place in Antalya, Turkey, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, respectively.

The Centre's decision comes shortly after the Union Cabinet approved the next set of climate action plans, which includes a 47% reduction in the emission intensity of the GDP by 2035 and doubling the carbon sink by expanding the tree and forest cover.

Approved last month, the new NDC (nationally determined contribution) under the Paris agreement also targets achieving 60% of cumulative installed electric capacity from non-fossil sources. The new action plans are to be achieved between 2031 and 2035.

AMITABH KANT
Former Niti Aayog CEO

"A sensible move. The developed world has not lived up to any of its commitments made at COP21 in Paris. COPs have been taken over by fossil fuel lobbyists.

COP33 OFFER

- Decision to withdraw COP33 offer conveyed to UNFCCC
- PM Modi had announced the bid in Dec 2023
- Cimate summit was last held in Belém, Brazil
- India hosted the summit only once before, in 2002

India ranks 3rd globally in renewable energy: Minister

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday said India had achieved the third place globally in renewable energy installed capacity, surpassing Brazil.

According to the latest data released by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), India's domestic renewable energy capacity stood at 250.52 GW as of December 2025.

This placed the country behind only China and the United States, while moving ahead of Brazil and Germany in the global rankings.

India added a record 55.3 GW of non-fossil-fuel capacity during 2025-26 — the highest-ever annual increase — compared to 29.5 GW added in 2024-25, Joshi told reporters here.

India's total power generation during 2025-26 (up to March 2026) reached 1,845.921 BU (Billion Units). The share of non-fossil fuels in total generation reached 29.2% (538.97 BU) in 2025-26. India achieved the milestone of 50% of its cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil-fuel sources in June 2025, five years ahead of the 2030 target set under its Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement.

Didi questions need for setting up appellate tribunals

KOLKATA, DHNS: Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday questioned the need for setting up appellate tribunals if the people disenfranchised after scrutiny by judicial officers could not get a chance to appeal and get voting rights restored before the polls in West Bengal.

Mamata also indicated that the TMC might move the court again over the deletion of 91 lakh voters from the electoral rolls in the state since the beginning of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), which shrunk the size of the electorate from 7.66 crore to 6.77 crore.

"We will fight legally to get the voters back on the list in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. If people cannot cast their votes, what is the need to set up the tribunals? And then you are saying that the list has been frozen. What is this? We will challenge it," said the TMC supremo, while addressing an election rally in Arambagh in the Hooghly district of West Bengal.

Kharge expresses 'sincere regret' over remark on Gujaratis

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday expressed "sincere regrets" for his remarks he made at a campaign rally in Kerala, where he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi could "fool people who are illiterate in Gujarat or other places" but not the electorate of the poll-bound state.

"Some remarks of mine in a recent election speech in Kerala are being deliberately misinterpreted. Even so, I express my sincere regret. It was never my intention to hurt the sentiments of the people of Gujarat for whom I have always had and will continue to have the highest of respect," Kharge posted on 'X'.

The BJP had demanded a public apology from the Congress chief, and a police complaint was also filed by the party's Delhi unit.

Kharge had made the remark at a rally in Kerala's Idukki while seeking to contrast Kerala's electorate with voters in Gujarat. He claimed that the people of Kerala were "very clever" and educated and could not be misled the way others in Gujarat. The remarks came as municipal polls are also scheduled to take place in Gujarat soon.

India welcomes ceasefire; calls for free navigation in Strait

After West Asia, govt hopes for peace in Ukraine

NEW DELHI, PTI

India on Wednesday welcomed the two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran and called for unimpeded freedom of navigation and flow of commerce through the Strait of Hormuz, while hoping that lasting peace will return to West Asia.

New Delhi said it continuously advocated that dialogue and diplomacy are essential to bring an early end to the hostilities. The conflict was triggered by US-Israeli strikes against Iran on February 28.

India's reaction came hours after Iran and the US agreed on the conditional ceasefire that included the opening of the Strait of Hormuz, the strategically key waterway between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman that handles roughly 20 per cent of global oil and LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas).

"We welcome the ceasefire reached and hope that it will lead to a lasting peace in West Asia. As we have continuously advocated earlier, de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy are essential to bring an early end to the ongoing conflict," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"The conflict has already caused immense suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks. We expect that unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz," he said.

Jaiswal said India hopes that the "development" in West Asia will also encourage peace efforts in Ukraine.

The announcement on the ceasefire resulted in a fall in the global crude oil prices and a rally in stock markets.

Global oil and gas prices had surged after Iran virtually blocked the Strait of Hormuz. The move severely impacted energy supplies to countries around the world including India.

In his remarks, Jaiswal said India has always been in favour of peace.

"We welcome all steps that lead to peace and stability. We hope that this development in West Asia will also encourage peace efforts in Ukraine," he said.

Jaiswal said ensuring safety, security and welfare of the Indian community in West Asian remains India's "highest priority".

The spokesperson also mentioned the fresh advisory issued by the Indian embassy in Tehran urging Indians to expeditiously exit the country.

"We are given to understand that we have around 7,500 Indian nationals who continue to remain in Iran. As of Tuesday, 1,864 Indians... exited through Armenia and Azerbaijan," he said.

To a question on the transit of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, he said India is closely following the developments.

Santosh Kumar, 40, a street food vendor, uses a kerosene stove to cook food on his cart, following LPG supply disruptions due to the US-Israeli conflict with Iran, in New Delhi, on Wedensday. REUTERS

Govt expands commercial LPG allocation to bulk consumers

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The central government on Wednesday expanded the allocation framework for bulk non-domestic (commercial) LPG by bringing a wider range of industrial sectors under its ambit. Eligible units can now receive up to 70% of their pre-West Asia conflict consumption.

Recently, several industries urged the Central government to allocate commercial LPG to them to continue their production.

The eligible industries include polymer, agriculture, packaging, paints, steel, metal, glass, pharma, food, uranium, heavy water, ceramics, foundries, forging units, and aerosol manufacturers.

Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Secretary Neeraj Mittal, in his letter to states, said that these units would receive up to 70% of their pre-March 2026 bulk LPG consumption levels, subject to an overall sectoral cap of 0.2 TMT (200 tonne) per day.

However, the allocation comes with certain conditions, under which priority will be accorded to units that require LPG for specialised applications that cannot be substituted with natural gas.

The Central government took this decision to ease supply constraints and sustain industrial output while maintaining its broader strategy of prioritising compressed and piped natural gas for households and transport sectors.

States have been asked to operationalise the allocation and ensure compliance with the overall sectoral limits.

Govt must take Oppn into confidence: Cong

NEW DELHI, PTI: As the US-Israel and Iran agree to a ceasefire, Congress on Wednesday slammed the government for its "missteps" since the outbreak of the conflict and said that it must take the Opposition into confidence for a unified approach to restore India's role as a credible voice for peace.

Congress's Foreign Affairs Department said the BJP-led government's "missteps, partisan alignment and cowardly silence" compromised India's energy security, strained relationships in its extended strategic neighbourhood, weakened the country's standing as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region and diminished its moral leadership in the Global South.

West Asia truce offers no relief to AP banana farmers

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

The two-week ceasefire that briefly paused the West Asia crisis came too late for thousands of farmers cultivating bananas across the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. It proved a complete washout for growers supplying the South African variety of green banana — Robusta Grand Naine (G9) — to markets in Iran, Iraq, the UAE, Bahrain and Oman. The war escalated during the peak export season, choking trade and blocking shipping routes at the worst possible moment.

While farmers in Anantapur and Kadapa harvest three banana crops each year, it is the crop gathered between December 15 and March-end that is best suited for export. Last year alone, government estimates show that Rayalaseema exported at least one lakh tonnes of bananas to West Asia and the Gulf.

"Between December and February, bananas in north Indian markets change colour due to harsh winter conditions and become unsuitable for export. Here in our region, the colour stays and the fruit remains export-ready; that's why traders from outside also look to Rayalaseema for procurement. But this season was a complete washout. We incurred heavy losses," banana farmer Mekala Siva Sankar Reddy of Anantapur told *DH*.

According to estimates, a farmer cultivating bananas on 10 acres incurred losses of Rs 15 lakh to Rs 20 lakh this season. The conflict strangled shipping lanes and froze trade routes to Gulf nations. For Rayalaseema's farmers heavily dependent on exports to Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, the fallout was swift and brutal. Since early March, exports halted, containers loaded with bananas sat stranded at sea, and farmgate prices collapsed.

"Due to the export halt, local markets are flooded with bananas, forcing farmers to sell at massive losses. Usually, the competition between export traders and local traders kept prices good for us. But this season, with exports halted and export traders absent from the market, local traders who buy for the domestic market offered very little — somewhere between Rs 5 and Rs 6 per kilo. This truce announcement came far too late for us," software engineer-turned-banana farmer Nutheti Jaya Simha told *DH*.

WAR SHOCKS

CROP LOSSES

- Robusta Grand Naine (G9) variety is prized for its shelf life
- War escalated during harvest window
- Farmers suffer heavy losses as ceasefire arrived after damage
- Containers stranded at sea, trade routes frozen
- Farmers with 10 acres lost Rs 15-20L this season

Cabinet okays Rs 40,000-cr hydro projects in Arunachal

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Union government on Wednesday approved the construction of two major hydro-power projects in Arunachal Pradesh with investments totalling Rs 40,150 crore.

The decision would accelerate the development of renewable energy and regional infrastructure, a statement said.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the construction of the Kamala Hydro Electric Project (1,720 MW) across the Kamle, Kra Daadi, and Kurung Kumey districts through a joint venture between state-owned NHPC Ltd and the state government, with a planned completion period of eight years.

The plant is expected to generate about 6,870 million units of electricity annually. The Kalai-II Hydro Electric Project (1,200 MW) on the Lohit River in the Anjaw district will be implemented via a joint venture between THDC India Limited and the Arunachal Pradesh government, with a target completion in 78 months.

The investments will be Rs 14,105.83 crore. Once operational, it is expected to generate around 4,853 million units annually.

The Centre will reportedly provide budgetary support for enabling infrastructure — including roads, bridges, and transmission lines — alongside central financial assistance toward the states' equity shares.

Both projects allocate 12% free power to host states, with an additional 1% earmarked for Local Area Development Funds.

These approvals complement other ongoing hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh, including the Subansiri Lower (2,000 MW), Dibang Multipurpose (2,880 MW), and Etalin (3,097 MW) projects, positioning the northeastern state as a key hub for India's renewable energy expansion and energy security strategy.

CLEAN POWER

- The proposed 1,720 MW Kamala project, worth Rs 260.7 crore, is a joint venture between NHPC Ltd and the Arunachal government
- The 1,200 MW Kalai-II project, with a total cost of Rs 141.06 crore, is a joint venture between THDC India Ltd and the local government
- The Brahmaputra River, which rises in Tibet and flows through India and Bangladesh, holds significant hydro potential along Indian stretch
- The basin's transboundary nature and proximity to China make water management and infrastructure planning a strategic concern, with India fearing that an upriver Chinese dam on the Yarlung Zangbo could cut dry-season flows on the Indian side by up to 85%

Higher fertiliser subsidy of Rs 41,534 cr for kharif

Amid rising input costs and supply uncertainties due to the West Asia conflict, the Centre on Wednesday approved a Rs 41,534-crore subsidy for Phosphatic and Potassic fertilisers for the upcoming 2025-26 kharif season, up by 12% from the year-ago period. The CCEA approved the subsidy rates effective from April 1 to September 30. The government hiked the allocation to ensure that fertilisers were available to farmers at affordable prices despite global prices of key inputs — such as diammonium phosphate and muriate of potash — already going up due to the West Asia conflict.

Strategic reset: India, B'desh signal constructive ties

NEW DELHI, PTI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday conveyed to his Bangladeshi counterpart Khalilur Rahman India's desire to engage "constructively" with the new government in Dhaka and further strengthen bilateral ties.

In their meeting, Jaishankar and Rahman deliberated extensively on charting a new path of cooperation, leaving behind over 18 months of diplomatic tension witnessed during the tenure of Bangladesh's interim government.

Rahman, accompanied by the Bangladesh prime minister's advisor for foreign affairs, Humayun Kabir, arrived in New Delhi on Tuesday.

It is the first high-level visit to India by a senior member of the new Bangladesh Nationalist Party government led by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman that came to power in February following the parliamentary elections.

"We discussed strengthening our bilateral relationship in its various facets. Also exchanged views on regional and global developments. Agreed to remain in close touch," Jaishankar said in a social media post after meeting Rahman.

The Bangladeshi side also reiterated its request to extradite former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to Bangladesh who have been awarded the death penalty by the International Crimes Tribunal in that country, it is learnt.

At the same time, the two sides were of the view that Sheikh Hasina's stay in India should not be allowed to impede ties between the two countries, people familiar with the matter said.

The previous government led by Muhammad Yunus had requested India to extradite Hasina as she was convicted of "crimes against humanity" for the crackdown on the student-led protests.

The Bangladesh foreign minister also met Oil and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Puri.

"The external affairs minister reiterated India's desire to engage constructively with the new government and further strengthen bilateral ties," the MEA said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman during a meeting. PTI

It is husband's duty to maintain wife and children, asserts SC

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The top court has said that a woman's education or professional qualifications cannot absolve a husband of his matrimonial, paternal, moral, and legal duty to provide for his spouse and children, as it directed a man to pay Rs 5 crore as permanent alimony to the wife.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta invoked Article 142 of the Constitution to dissolve the marriage as irretrievably broken down.

The court noted that there was no doubt that the marriage was dead for all practical purposes. It also terminated all proceedings initiated and pending inter se — including those against the relatives and legal counsels — "to do complete justice and provide a quietus to this decade-long dispute which has crossed all limits and has assumed the status of a matrimonial battle of Mahabharata".

In its April 7 judgment, the bench said it went without saying that maintenance, upbringing, and the education of the son would require significant financial resources, especially considering today's high cost of living and education.

"Thus, even if the appellant-wife is highly educated and professionally qualified, that by itself cannot be a reason to absolve the respondent-husband from his matrimonial, paternal, moral, and legal responsibility to provide for his wife and children," said the court.

The wife filed an appeal against a September 2024 Bombay High Court order that refused to expedite the execution proceedings for the recovery of long-pending maintenance arrears arising from a protracted matrimonial dispute between the parties. The court also rejected the husband's counterclaim of Rs 20 crore from the wife.

The court granted the appellant-wife absolute custody of both sons.

Adultery, same-sex rulings on constitutional morality not good law: Centre to SC

As govt argues in Sabarimala case, court says it is about gender discrimination

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Central government on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that two landmark rulings — striking down the adultery provision and upholding same-sex consensual relationships — rested on a subjective invocation of "constitutional morality" and ought to be treated as "not good law".

In his arguments before a nine-judge bench in the Sabarimala review matter, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that "constitutional morality" was not textually present in the Constitution, but was rather a judicially evolved, vague, and indeterminate concept.

Maintaining that he would not object to the striking down of the adultery revision under Section 497 of the IPC as unconstitutional on the ground of discrimination or arbitrariness under Article 14, he said he was opposed to the court relying on the "vague and subjective" concept of constitutional morality in the case.

He submitted that the Navtej Singh Johar Vs Union of India judgment, which decriminalised homosexuality, demonised the term "morality" as mob morality or majoritarianism.

"In a democratic and secular country like ours, the mob or the majority shall prevail. It simply cannot, not because this concept of 'constitutional morality' coined in 2014 prevents it, but the Constitution and its provisions prevent it," he said.

Mehta contended these judgments used abstract principles to invalidate legal provisions without a clear textual basis. Extending this approach to religious practices would allow courts to enter areas involving faith, belief and modes of worship, which fall outside judicial competence, he said.

The bench said the judgment in adultery was not under question, and it was an issue of gender discrimination, where equality had not been respected in the law.

Mehta said that Section 497 could have been declared unconstitutional on the grounds of Article 14, as it is arbitrary and discriminatory.

The bench said, "You can say for the enforcement of a fundamental right, it need not be on the touchstone of constitutional morality. Constitutional morality is in the realm of constitutional governance. It may not be palatable to you, but that is not the subject matter as such here."

Mehta said every law, whether on morality or not, would have to pass constitutional muster, and that there was no need for a judgment for that.

'HC missed woods for trees': SC acquits jawan in officer killing case

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court has set aside the conviction of a constable from the Indian Reserve Battalion in the 2014 case of gunning down his boss, a Sub Inspector, for alleged denial of leave, saying the High Court missed the woods for the trees while upholding his conviction.

A bench ordered forthwith release of appellant Jai Prakash Yadav, who has been in custody for 12 years, saying there was no convincing evidence on record to suggest that it was he, and none else, who killed the officer.

In the case, the court noted there was no eyewitness in the present case and the prosecution case rested entirely on circumstantial evidence.

The bench cited Sharad Birdhichand Sarda Vs State of Maharashtra (1984), which stated that every link in the chain of circumstantial evidence must be conclusively established. Even a single missing or weak link may prove fatal to the prosecution's case. The chain must be so complete as to point unerringly to the guilt of the accused, and to no one else. Where, on the same set of evidence, two views are reasonably possible, the benefit of doubt must necessarily be extended to the accused.

The bench noted the informant, a hawaldar, testified that he was on duty with four other constables at the time of the incident. Upon hearing gunfire, he came out of the guard room, went to the spot, and found the appellant coming from the side of the room of the deceased.

Manipur death toll at 5; three of Kuki group held

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The death toll in fresh violence in Manipur reached five after one person, who was injured in firing by security forces on Tuesday, succumbed to his injuries on Wednesday.

The situation across the valley remained tense and life was disrupted as the curfew was still in force in parts of the Meitei-dominated Valley districts. The ban on internet, too, continued.

Defying the curfew, members of the Coordination Committee on Manipur Unity (COCOMI) staged a protest in Imphal and tried to storm into the residence of Chief Minister Y. Khemchand Singh on Wednesday, prompting security forces to fire tear gas shells.

The protesters demanded the resignation of the CM and Home Minister Konthoujam Govindas Singh for their alleged failure to protect civilians in Bishnupur and arrest those involved in the killing. The organisation decided to continue their protest.

Many in Bishnupur also staged protests and blocked the road near Moirang demanding immediate arrest of those involved in the killing.

Two children of a BSF jawan died after a suspected projectile hit them in Bishnupur district. His wife was seriously injured.

This triggered a protest by locals and three persons died and 30 were injured after they allegedly tried to attack a CRPF camp near Moirang. They alleged involvement of the Kukis in the attack.

Kuki organisations, including the United Kuki National Army (UKNA), an armed group, denied the allegation about their involvement.

Manipur police said in a statement on Wednesday that three suspected cadres of UKNA were arrested with weapons during a combing operation launched in search of those involved in the killing.

Police recovered an AK-47 rifle, one pistol and ammunition from the three, identified as Jampao Kuki, Sasang and Paulallem Vaiphai. The UKNA, however, denied its involvement.

UP legislator's son inspects hospital, sparks controversy

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

In a shocking incident, the son of an Uttar Pradesh MLA conducted an inspection at a government hospital in Rampur district, issued directions to the staff and checked the records.

Umair Ansari, son of Apna Dal (S) MLA Shafiq Ahmed Ansari, an alliance partner of the BJP, was accompanied by four policemen. He also occupied the chair of the chief superintendent of the hospital while issuing directives to the staff and doctors on duty.

According to reports, the inspection of the Community Health Centre at Swar was conducted a few days back, but the matter came to light on Wednesday after a video, purportedly showing him taking rounds of the ward and inspecting the attendance register, went viral on social media.

Reports said Ansari asked doctors to ensure that patients were provided all facilities and to ensure the availability of medicines at the CHC. He warned them of action if patients were forced to purchase medicines from the market.

Taking a serious view of the matter, chief medical officer Dr Deepa Singh constituted a team comprising the additional CMO and deputy CMO to probe the issue and submit a report.

"An MLA can conduct inspections, but his son or any member of his family is not authorised to do so... it cannot be allowed," said a senior district official in Rampur.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

Hagar The Horrible

Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

Marvin

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SAQHU

USOTJ

TTUWIO

PSEICT

I'd love one on my wrist instead of pulling it out of my pocket each time.
I think we could make it smaller.
I know we can!
9/27
WHEN ASKED IF THEY COULD MAKE A TIMEPIECE FOR THE WRIST, PATEK AND PHILIPPE SAID ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

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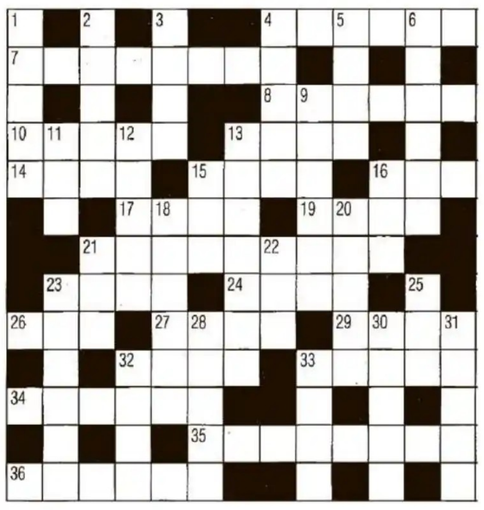
Yesterday's Jumbles: ALIAS STUNT GENDER ORIOLE
Answer: She disagreed with the doctor's treatment plan for her knees, but she had no — LEG TO STAND ON

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12391



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
4 Strong? Very much so! (6)
7 Canada's main boat-building province? (8)
8 What gold needn't be (6)
10 Like the water to jump across? (5)
13 Stick with James (4)
14 Its possible link is with heat treatment (4)
15 Vessels for suckers? (4)
16 Young Hawkins is in the gym, we're told (3)
17 Piece of grazing land in Austria (4)
19 Computerised picture of Silicon Valley (4)
21 Make the coffee cold instantly! (6-3)
23 Hospital for cats? (4)
24 Two-dimensional sphere? (4)
26 Nominal knowledge (3)
27 Become weary of what has some sort of merit (4)
29 Catch only in part? (4)
32 Be inclined to look after things (4)
33 River seen meandering around India (5)
34 Choose to figure in a dodgy deed (6)
35 Baseballers who can give you tips about an actress (8)
36 Be very sorry, but it's weak theatre (6)

DOWN
1 Strike many as being in the bag (5)
2 A backer with spirit? (5)
3 Jug of porridge? (4)
4 His partner is less masterly! (5)
5 A lucky strike at archery? (4)
6 Is its function to fix a match? (6)
9 At heart, Enid is upset (6)
11 A sliding cover? (3)
12 Like rebellious young men of yester year? (5)
13 Bird whose noise is only partly heard? (7)
15 Western girl? (3)
16 She's a delight (3)
18 Lay like a saint amid the wild deer (6)
20 Cater for managing a large box (5)
21 A noisy French one can be delightful (3)
22 Sooner than show a little reverence? (3)
23 Where Gene and Virginia get together (6)
25 Is she a grandmother? (3)
28 About due to finish, to spill a pint is useless (5)
30 Bolt a plate while it's hot (5)
31 Can be eaten quietly at leisure (5)
32 A fatherly occasion? (4)
33 Could it hurt your foot? (4)

ACROSS
4 Injury, wound (6)
7 Throw this at weddings (8)
8 Tarantula, for example (6)
10 Elude (5)
13 Robbery, slang (4)
14 Fizzy water (4)
15 Lord (4)
16 Farmyard bird (3)
17 Complain bitterly (4)
19 Parched with heat (4)
21 Traitors (9)
23 Flat circular plate (4)
24 Notion (4)
26 Jewel (3)
27 Bonce (4)
29 Bard (4)
32 Grumble, complain (4)
33 Willow (5)
34 Skinflints (6)
35 Legal voting age (8)
36 Of the teeth (6)

DOWN
1 Land measures (5)
2 Work dough (5)
3 This place (4)
4 Smooth cotton thread (5)
5 Deep drink (4)
6 Unlocked (6)
9 Exhibit, flaunt (6)
11 Solemn pledge or promise (3)
12 Challenges (5)
13 Of Belgium (7)
15 Pastry dish (3)
16 Belonging to him (3)
18 Fasten securely (6)
20 Harvests (5)
21 Raised edge (3)
22 Append (3)
23 Crave (6)
25 Observe (3)
28 Artist's stand (5)
30 Lubricated (5)
31 Torso (5)
32 Thaw (4)
33 Darts line (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12390

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Rouses 7, C-Ava-Tina 8, Fin-O 10, B-all-ot 11, Sadist 14, E'er 16, Pence 17, Kid-d 19, D-O-yen 21, M-one-t. 22, Kin-g(a)s 23, Wren 26, S-ages 28, Mia 29, Player 30, W-inkl-e 31, Edge 32, Repelled 33, SE-Rene.
DOWN: 1, Reeb-OK 2, Sailed 3, Scot 4, Para-pet 5, Di-g in 6, Haste 8, Fled 9, No.-R 12, Den 13, Score 15, SO-NG-S 18, I-Deal 19, Don 20, Yes 21, Miser-L-y 22, Key 23, Winger 24, Rake 25, Needle(ss) 26, Spurt 27, Ga-MP-s 28, M-I-D 30, We-DS.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Tribes 7, Escalate 8, Gown 10, Elated 11, Almost 14, Let 16, Basis 17, Tile 19, Baron 21, Decay 22, Bidet 23, Prey 26, Bogus 28, Tie 29, Atones 30, Tureen 31, Opal 32, Industry 33, Skewer.
DOWN: 1, Talent 2, Bootee 3, Send 4, Tallboy 5, Lagos 6, Beats 8, Gall 9, Wet 12, Man 13, Sidle 15, Laces 18, Ingot 19, Bed 20, Rat 21, Disease 22, Bun 23, Pirate 24, Reel 25, Yonder 26, Basil 27, Gouda 28, Tup 30, Toys.

◆SU-DO-KU-6875◆

		7	5					4
1				7			5	
	5		3					
	6			4		8		
3		1				7		5
		2		8			1	
					7		2	
	2			9				6
6					2	4		

hard

1	6	8	9	3	7	4	2	5
3	2	5	4	6	1	8	9	7
4	7	9	5	2	8	3	6	1
9	1	2	8	5	4	6	7	3
6	5	7	1	9	3	2	4	8
8	3	4	2	7	6	1	5	9
2	9	6	3	8	5	7	1	4
5	4	3	7	1	2	9	8	6
7	8	1	6	4	9	5	3	2

SOLUTION TO 6874

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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M3 M3 A1 O1 S1 S1 I1 — 4th Letter Triple
I1 O1 W4 W4 N1 D2 S1 — Double Word Score
V4 R1 A1 A1 I1 I1 T1
U1 O1 C3 N1 R1 C3 S1

RACK 1
RACK 2
RACK 3
RACK 4

PAR SCORE 135-145
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

A1 C3 R1 Y4 L1 I1 C3
B3 A1 N1 G2 L1 E1
H4 U1 N1 G2 E1 R1
L1 E1 A1 R1 N1 E1 D2

RACK 1 = 92
RACK 2 = 27
RACK 3 = 30
RACK 4 = 74
JUDD'S TOTAL 223

PAR SCORE 145-155

HITORI-3329

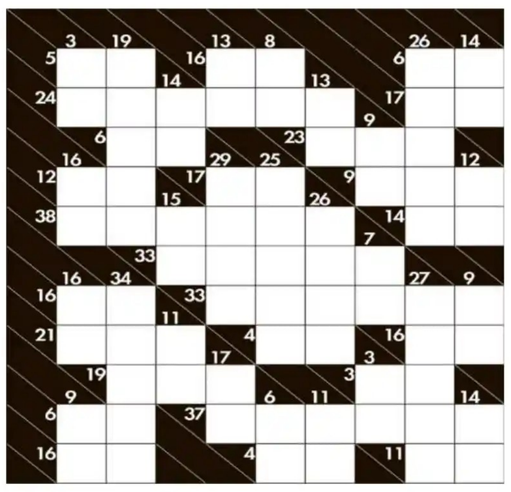
4	1	6	4	8	4	7	3
3	4	4	1	2	8	4	6
7	6	2	4	7	4	8	4
2	8	2	4	1	7	4	3
7	8	8	3	4	4	6	2
8	5	4	7	3	2	4	1
5	2	4	2	4	3	4	8
4	2	7	2	5	6	3	4

SOLUTION TO 3328

■	6	4	■	2	1	■	5
2	8	■	1	4	5	6	3
4	■	2	3	1	■	7	6
6	1	■	8	5	7	■	2
5	■	6	2	7	■	4	1
3	5	1	■	8	2	■	4
8	4	■	5	3	■	1	7
7	■	3	4	■	8	2	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

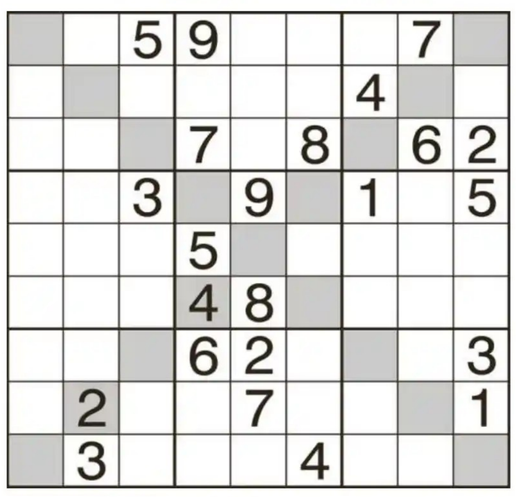
KAKURO- 3329



SOLUTION TO 3328

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3880



SOLUTION TO 3879

4	3	8	9	7	2	1	6	5
2	6	7	1	5	8	4	3	9
5	1	9	3	6	4	7	8	2
3	8	2	5	4	9	6	1	7
1	9	6	8	2	7	3	5	4
7	5	4	6	1	3	2	9	8
6	7	1	4	9	5	8	2	3
9	4	3	2	8	1	5	7	6
8	2	5	7	3	6	9	4	1

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

West Asia war: Iran threatens response if Israel does not cease Lebanon 'aggression'

Israeli strikes kill over 100 in Beirut

Tehran warns of Hormuz disruption as toll rises

BEIRUT, AP/PTI

Israeli strikes hit several commercial and residential areas in central Beirut without warning on Wednesday, hours after a ceasefire was announced in the US-Israel war with Iran.

Lebanon said 112 people were killed and hundreds were wounded in what was one of the deadliest days in the latest Israel-Hezbollah war.

US President Donald Trump told PBS NewsHour that Lebanon was not included in the deal because of the Lebanese militant Hezbollah group. When asked about Israel's latest strikes, he said, "That's a separate skirmish." Israel had said the agreement does not extend to its war with the Iran-backed Hezbollah, although mediator Pakistan said it does.

The fleeting sense of relief among Lebanese after the ceasefire announcement turned into panic as Israel's military carried out what it described as its largest coordinated strike in the current war, hitting more than 100 Hezbollah targets within 10 minutes in Beirut, southern Lebanon and eastern Bekaa Valley.

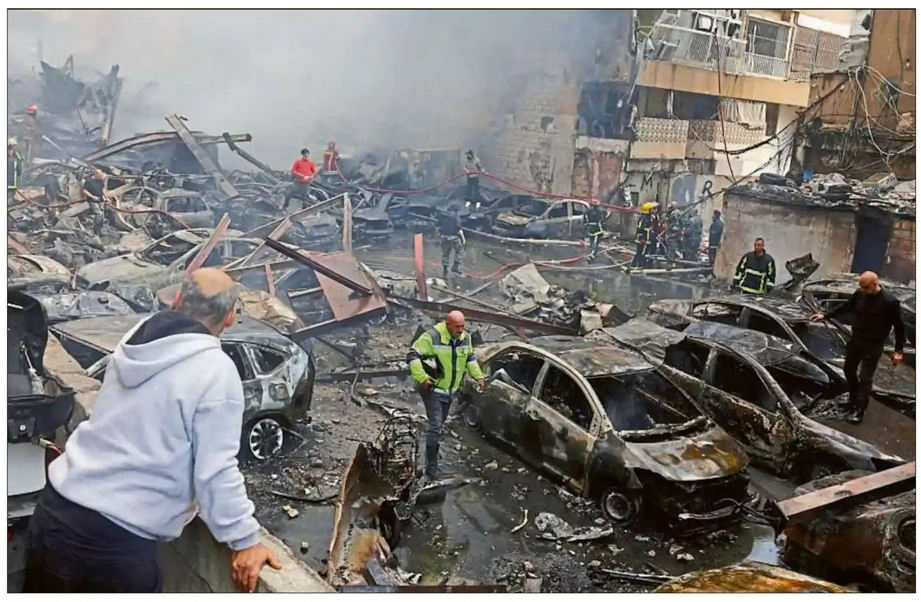
Black smoke towered over several parts of the seaside capital, where large numbers of people displaced by war have taken shelter. Explosions interrupted the honking of traffic on what had been a bustling, blue-sky afternoon. Ambulances raced towards open flames. Apartment buildings were struck. Journalists saw charred bodies in vehicles and on the ground at one of Beirut's busiest intersections in the central Corniche al Mazraa neighbourhood, a mixed commercial and residential area.

In response to the attacks on Lebanon, Iran later on Wednesday said it would once again halt the movement of oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz . "We issue a firm warning to the United States, which violates treaties, and to its Zionist ally, its executioner: if the aggression against beloved Lebanon does not cease immediately, we will fulfil our duty and deliver a response," the Iran's Revolutionary Guards said.

Central Beirut has been targeted before, but not by so many strikes at once and in the middle of the day. Israel had rarely struck central Beirut since the outbreak of the latest Israel-Hezbollah war on March 2, but has regularly struck southern and eastern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs.

MAJOR ESCALATION

- Israeli strikes hit central Beirut hours after a US-Israel ceasefire with Iran, killing at least 112 and injuring 700.
- US President Donald Trump said Lebanon was excluded from the deal, , although mediator Pakistan said it does.



Rescuers work at the site of an Israeli strike in Beirut, Lebanon, on Wednesday. REUTERS

World leaders urge 'swift and lasting end' to Iran war

LONDON/MOSCOW, REUTERS/PTI

Leaders of Britain, Germany, Japan, Canada and other European countries said on Wednesday that the goal is to negotiate "a swift and lasting end to the war" in Iran within the coming days.

"Our governments will contribute to ensuring freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz," the joint statement said.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said there was still "a lot of work to do" to reopen the Strait of Hormuz following the ceasefire, speaking during a visit to the Gulf.

"We now have a ceasefire, but there's a lot of work to do to make sure that it becomes permanent and brings about the peace that we all want to see," he said in a speech to military personnel at a base in Saudi Arabia. "But also a lot of work to do in relation to the Strait of Hormuz, which has an impact everywhere across the world."

Starmer said it was vital to ensure the Strait remains open to stabilise global energy supplies and prices. British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper also spoke to her US counterpart, Marco Rubio, on Tuesday about diplomatic measures to secure the reopening of the Strait.

Welcoming the ceasefire agreement, Russia said it supports the decision not to strike civilian facilities or economic infrastructure in Iran. The Kremlin said the development was "very important".

"Against the backdrop of yesterday's rather harsh statements from various sides, which caused significant reactions around the world, we certainly welcome this news of a ceasefire and support the decision not to move further along the path of armed escalation... especially the decision not to strike civilian facilities or Iran's economic infrastructure," the Kremlin said.

KEIR STARMER
British prime minister

"We now have a ceasefire, but there's a lot of work to do to make sure that it becomes permanent and brings about the peace that we all want to see.

Pak PM urges restraint

ISLAMABAD, PTI: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday urged all sides to exercise restraint and respect the US-Iran ceasefire, amid reports of violations of the truce across the conflict zone.

The US and Iran earlier agreed on a conditional two-week ceasefire that included the opening of the Strait of Hormuz for shipping. "Violations of the ceasefire have been reported at a few places across the conflict zone, which undermine the spirit of the peace process," Shehbaz said in a post on X.

"I earnestly and sincerely urge all parties to exercise restraint and respect the ceasefire for two weeks, as agreed upon, so that diplomacy can play a leading role towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict," he added.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held a phone conversation with Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir and discussed the violation of the ceasefire by Israel in Lebanon.

'3 key clauses of truce violated'

WASHINGTON, REUTERS: Iran's Parliament speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said on Wednesday that three key clauses of a 10-point proposal were violated before negotiations set to start on Friday in Pakistan, adding that in such a situation, negotiations were unreasonable.

The breaches included the violation of a true in Lebanon, the entry of an "entruding drone" into Iranian airspace and the denial of Iran's right to uranium enrichment, he said.

Taiwan Opposition leader pledges reconciliation with China

NANJING, REUTERS

Taiwan opposition leader Cheng Li-wun pledged on Wednesday to channel the spirit of her party's founder, Sun Yat-sen, and seek reconciliation with China, offering praise at his tomb for the country's achievements following the communist revolution.

Cheng, chairwoman of the Kuomintang (KMT), Taiwan's largest opposition party, is in China at a time of increased Chinese military pressure on Taiwan, which Beijing views as its own territory, and as the opposition-dominated parliament stalls a government plan for $40 billion in extra defence spending.

In a moment filled with symbolism on her first full day in the country, Cheng laid a wreath at Sun's mausoleum in the eastern city of Nanjing, also the capital of the KMT-led Republic of China government before it fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war to Mao Zedong's communists.

"The core values of Sun Yat-sen's ideal that 'all under heaven are equal' have always been equality, inclusiveness and unity," Cheng said in footage carried live on Taiwanese television channels.

"We should work together to promote reconciliation and unity across the Taiwan Strait and create regional prosperity and peace." Sun, who overthrew the last imperial dynasty and founded the Republic of China in 1912, died of cancer in 1925.

He is still officially venerated in Taiwan as the founder of the Republic of China, and also in China by the Communist Party as a Chinese national hero.

Kuomintang Chairperson Cheng Li-wen speaks to the press after a visit at the Sun Yat-Sen Mausoleum in Nanjing on Wednesday. AFP

France unveils rearmament boost to face Russia threat

Military plan ramps up drones and spending by 2030

PARIS, AFP

France is to ramp up explosive drone stocks by up to 400 percent by 2030, draft legislation showed on Wednesday, as the country seeks to accelerate rearmament to counter an increasingly aggressive Russia.

The military spending bill was presented after France's top commanders said the country must be ready in the next few years for a clash with Russia and that NATO should adapt to produce more weapons, and faster. The government on Wednesday presented its updated military planning law, adding another 36 billion euros to France's defence spending between 2024 and 2030, on top of the 413 billion euros already allocated.

"Our armed forces must be capable of responding to a major engagement within a timeframe that none of us can predict," Defence Minister Catherine Vautrin said following a meeting of top defence and security officials.

According to the revised legislation, which is due to be presented to parliament, the annual budget would reach 76.3 billion euros in 2030, representing 2.5 percent of gross domestic product, compared with 57.1 billion euros for this year. The legislation does not foresee an increase in the size of France's armed forces, which would remain at 210,000 active-duty personnel, 225 combat aircraft and 15 first-rate frigates. The conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia have prompted a particular focus on stocks of missiles and shells. NATO commanders say the military bloc must respond to challenges such as Russia and Iran mass-producing drones.

According to the draft legislation, an additional 8.5 billion euros will be allocated to boost stockpiles of ammunition between now and 2030, bringing the total to 26 billion euros.

While stock levels are confidential, they are set to rise by 400 percent for all types of remotely operated munitions such as explosive drones, and by 85 percent for Scalp cruise missiles.

French President Emmanuel Macron attends a meeting of France's defence and security council at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Wednesday. REUTERS

Bangladesh parliament endorses ban on Hasina's party

DHAKA, PTI: Bangladesh's parliament on Wednesday passed a law endorsing the previous Muhammad Yunus-led interim government's order to disband deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League party.

"This bill concerns the banning of a genocidal, terrorist organisation. This is an amendment to the previous Anti-Terrorism Act," Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed told parliament, without naming the Awami League.

Ahmed said the new law would continue the suspension of the Awami League's registration with the Election Commission and ensure the party's trial for its alleged involvement in "genocide".

Treasury bench members belonging to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's Bangladesh Nationalist Party passed the bill, keeping intact the ordinance framed by the interim government while amending the previous terrorism law. Yunus government had first amended the original Anti-Terrorism Act, with the revised version stating that if any individual or organisation was found to be involved in terrorist activities, the government could disband them.

Earth is getting ever brighter at night, finds study

WASHINGTON, REUTERS

Daily satellite observations have revealed a continued global increase in nighttime brightness due to artificial lighting, with important regional variations including a surge in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia alongside a deliberate dimming in Europe driven by concerns over energy conservation and light pollution.

Researchers documented a 16% net increase in global nighttime light from 2014 to 2022, but showed it was not a steady brightening. Instead, it was a patchwork of rising and falling regional brightness shaped by numerous factors. The US in 2022 had by far the highest total luminosity of any country, followed by China, India, Canada and Brazil.

Brightening was found to be driven mainly by rapid urbanisation, infrastructure expansion and rural electrification.

Dimming, however, had two very different drivers. Abrupt dimming was usually caused by natural disasters, power grid failures and armed conflicts.

Gradual dimming was often deliberate, guided by government regulations, transitions to energy-efficient LED lights and efforts to cut light pollution. "For decades, we've held a simplified view that the Earth at night is just getting steadily brighter as human population and economies grow," said Professor Zhe Zhu of the University of Connecticut's Global Environmental Remote Sensing Laboratory and senior author of the study.

A view of Earth as seen from space. AFP FILE

WORDS MATTER

Indian-origin healthcare worker called 'auntie', wins harassment claim in UK

LONDON, PTI

An Indian-origin healthcare assistant employed with the UK's National Health Service (NHS) has won a harassment claim over being called "auntie" by a nurse colleague of Ghanaian heritage.

Watford Employment Tribunal Judge George Alliott upheld that Ilda Esteves was harassed on the grounds of age and sex and directed the West London NHS Trust to pay her a total of 1,425.15 pounds in damages for "injury to feelings".

A three-judge panel, which heard the case last year and issued detailed reasons behind the judgment last month, accepted that "auntie" is a term of respect for older people in Ghanaian culture. However, staff nurse Charles Oppong, who was responsible for leading teams on the ward, should not have made such comments. "We find that Charles Oppong's purpose was probably an offensive attempt at humour," the judgment notes.

"We find that the claimant did perceive it as creating an offensive environment. We find that the circumstances of the comments being made in the office, in the corridor and at handover were such that they had the effect of creating an offensive environment. We find that it was reasonable for the comments to have that effect. Consequently, the claimant's claim of harassment on this ground succeeds," it reads.

Esteves, a 61-year-old healthcare professional of Indian heritage, gave evidence to the tribunal that Oppong used the term "auntie" on several occasions despite her asking to be referred to by her first name.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Artemis II crew Christina Koch, Jeremy Hansen, Reid Wiseman and Victor Glover pose for a photo inside the Orion spacecraft on their way home following a flyby of the far side of the Moon on Tuesday. REUTERS

'Ketamine Queen' jailed for 15 years over Perry drugs

▸ A drug dealer dubbed the "Ketamine Queen", who supplied the drugs that led to the death of "Friends" star Matthew Perry, was sentenced to 15 years in prison by a California court on Wednesday, AFP reports from Los Angeles.

Jasveen Sangha, 42, was one of five people charged in connection with the death of the Canadian-American actor, who was found unresponsive in the hot tub of his luxury Los Angeles home in 2023. Sangha pleaded guilty in September to five felony counts related to Perry's death. Prosecutors argued that she should receive a 15-year sentence, stating in court documents that she "knew — and disregarded — the grave harm her conduct was causing" while expanding her drug trafficking activities. Defence attorneys had sought a sentence of time served, telling the court that Sangha had taken responsibility for her actions. They said she has a history of substance abuse and has been in custody since August 2024. "She has maintained sustained and exemplary sobriety, and actively engaged in rehabilitative programmes while in custody," her lawyers said.

Greece restricts social media

▸ Greece will ban access to social media for children under 15 from January 1, 2027, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said on Wednesday, becoming the latest country to act as concern grows over the platforms' impact, AFP reports from Athens.

"We have decided to go ahead with a difficult but necessary measure: ban access to social media for children under 15 years old," he said in a video posted on TikTok. "Greece is among the first countries in the world to adopt such a measure," the prime minister said, adding that he would put pressure on the European Union to follow suit. Mitsotakis said he used social media to make the announcement so he could address teenagers.

Indigenous people carry the sculpture of a skull during a protest march to the Congress building at the annual Indigenous gathering Acampamento Terra Livre in Brasilia on Tuesday. AFP

20 people killed in Nigeria attacks

▸ At least 20 people have been killed by gunmen in attacks on two villages in the north-central region of Nigeria, AP/PTI reports from Abuja (Nigeria).

The attacks occurred in the early hours of Tuesday in Bagna and Erena, located in the Shiroro area of Niger State. Shiroro is about 250 kilometres, or a four-hour drive, from the capital, Abuja. "They came on motorbikes and began shooting. It was a surprise attack, because it was in the early hours of the morning," said Jibrin Isah, who lives in Erena.

Residents claimed that at least 20 people were killed, with more missing. However, local police said that only three people were killed.

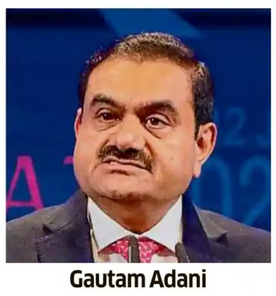
Nepal ex-PM Deuba faces arrest

▸ A Nepalese court has issued arrest warrants against former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and his wife Arzu Deuba Rana, the former foreign minister, in money laundering cases, PTI reports from Kathmandu.

The Kathmandu District Court issued warrants against the couple on Tuesday following a request by the Department of Money Laundering, which is investigating the couple's assets, according to The Kathmandu Post newspaper. Citing investigative sources, the paper said that the couple is believed to be in Singapore. The department started probing the assets of the couple after burnt pieces of banknotes were recovered from their residence at Budhanilkantha in September. Deuba, who served as prime minister five times, has remained a key figure in politics since 1991. His wife served as foreign minister.

Actors Meryl Streep and Anne Hathaway promote their film "The Devil Wears Prada 2" in Seoul, South Korea, on Wednesday. AP/PTI

Biz Bytes



Gautam Adani

Adani wins US court hearing in SEC fraud suit

NEW YORK, PTI: A US judge granted a request from billionaire Gautam Adani to schedule a hearing in his effort to dismiss a US Securities and Exchange Commission fraud case, which he says lacks necessary jurisdiction as well as fails on multiple reasons.

This followed lawyers of Adani and his nephew, Sagar filing a plea seeking dismissal of the case.

"The court has received Defendants' letter requesting a pre-motion conference on their anticipated motion to dismiss the Complaint. The court GRANTS that request and DIRECTS the parties" to schedule the pre-motion conference, the Eastern District court of New York said in its order.

Bosch to buy 100% of Chassis Systems

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bosch Limited on Wednesday said it intends to significantly enhance its portfolio by acquiring the Vehicle Motion business. The company plans to acquire 100% of Bosch Chassis Systems India Private Limited through a cash deal and issuance of equity shares on a preferential basis.

This development positions Bosch Limited with a more comprehensive mobility portfolio.

The transaction will strengthen the company's capabilities, enabling it to further invest in critical domains like safety and braking over and above its strong footprint in power solutions, the company said in a statement.

Cycle acquires majority stake in Satvik

BENGALURU, DHNS: Cycle Pure Agarbathi on Wednesday announced the acquisition of puja accessory brand Satvik, with the aim to strengthen its presence in the devotional and spiritual space.

Arjun Ranga

Arjun Ranga, MD of Cycle Pure Agarbathi, said the company has acquired a majority stake in Satvik for an undisclosed amount. "In India, there are diverse cultures and traditions. Our acquisition of Satvik is a natural extension of our longstanding commitment to the devotional space, enabling us to offer a more comprehensive range of authentic products while accelerating growth in a fast-evolving, digitally driven market," he said.

KreditBee joins unicorn club

BENGALURU, DHNS: Digital lending platform KreditBee has entered the unicorn club with a $280-million fundraising round, achieving a post-money valuation of $1.5 billion. This is the first startup to enter the unicorn club in FY27. The round was led by Motilal Oswal Alternates, Hornbill Capital, and MUFG-backed Dragon Funds, with participation from WhiteOak Capital, A.P. Moller Holding, and existing investors including Premji Invest and Advent International.

The capital will help expand the lending portfolio, deepen presence across key markets, and strengthen its tech platform.

RBI keeps repo rate unchanged at 5.25%

Raises inflation projection; GDP growth to slow to 6.9% in FY27

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), on Wednesday, decided to keep key policy interest rates unchanged with a neutral stance, giving indication about flexibility on future monetary policy amid continued uncertainty over the West Asia conflict.

Repo rate, the interest at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks for their short-term needs, stands unchanged at 5.25%.

The 6-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously took the decision to maintain the status quo on key rates.

The MPC also decided to continue with the neutral stance. This means the rates can be increased or cut in the next policy review, which is scheduled in the first week of June.

Inflation forecast

The central bank revised its consumer price index (CPI) inflation forecast for 2026-27 upward to 4.6% from its earlier projection of 4%. The country's gross domestic product (GDP) growth is estimated to decline to 6.9% from the projected 7.6% in 2025-26.

The RBI flagged downside risks to growth from supply chain disruptions and the ongoing West Asia conflict.

"The West Asia conflict is likely to impede growth. Higher input costs associated with increase in energy prices and international freight and insurance costs along with supply-chain disruptions that would constrain availability of key inputs for downstream sectors, would impair growth," said RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra.

The MPC noted that since the last policy meeting, geopolitical uncertainties have heightened significantly. Headline inflation remains contained and below the target. "However, upside risks to the inflation outlook, driven by increased energy price pressures and probable weather disturbances affecting food prices, have increased. Core inflation pressures remain muted, although supply chain dislocations and the risk of second-round effects render the future inflation trajectory uncertain," Malhotra said.

According to analysts, the West Asia conflict has impacted the RBI's policy rate decisions and projections on GDP growth and inflation.

"Out of the eight statements by the current governor, this statement is most cautious/hawkish in our opinion but does not mean a rate hike is imminent," SBI Research said in a note.

Impact on growth

"The choice of words and the latent signal the latest statement carries reflects deep understanding of the evolving geo-economic situation in the world without hinting at any imminent rate hike with regulatory gaze hobbling between growth and inflationary concerns," it said. CPI inflation for 2026-27 is projected at 4.6% with Q1 at 4%; Q2 at 4.4%; Q3 at 5.2%; and Q4 at 4.7%. Core inflation is projected at 4.4%.

The projections on growth and inflation — the first estimates by the MPC for fiscal 2027 following the release of the new data series — reflect the recognition that the impact on growth could be greater than that on inflation in the near term, said Dipti Deshpande, Principal Economist, Crisil.

Highlights of RBI's April monetary policy

Sanjay Malhotra

Central bank projections for FY27

%YoY	Inflation	GDP
Q1FY27	4.0	6.8
Q2FY27	4.4	6.7
Q3FY27	5.2	7.0
Q4FY27	4.7	7.2
FY27	4.6	6.9

Source: RBI, Yes Bank Economics Research

Benchmark interest rate (repo) remains unchanged at 5.25%

FY27 GDP growth pegged at 6.9%

Inflation estimated at 4.6% in FY27

Next meeting of RBI's rate-setting panel scheduled for June **3 to 5**

- Monetary policy stance retained at neutral
- West Asia crisis likely to impact domestic economy

RBI plans NBFC framework amid lack of clarity on Tata Sons' listing

MUMBAI, PTI: RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Wednesday announced that the monetary authority will be coming out with a new framework for non-bank lenders amid a lack of clarity over Tata Sons' listing issue.

"We are coming up with a new framework for NBFCs. Very soon, we should," Malhotra said.

On a specific question on Tata Sons, Malhotra said the new framework will categorise NBFCs. He, however, did not elaborate further on the matter, which has been tracked intensely because the RBI is likely to decide if Tata Sons continues to be privately-held or is forced to list.

'No issue with ethics, governance at HDFC Bank'

MUMBAI, PTI: The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday said HDFC Bank's board meeting minutes and other records are studied as part of supervision exercise, and reiterated that the largest private sector lender has not been found wanting on ethics and governance.

"I would like to reiterate that at no point during our supervision or after examining their records did any governance or conduct-related material issue come to our notice. Under our regular supervision, board minutes are also reviewed. Copies of the minutes are provided to us," RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said.

It can be noted that the resignation letter did not mention any specific reason beyond incongruence on ethics and values, and the bank's other board members also said they were "baffled" because the then chairman, Atanu Chakraborty, did not cite any particular instances during their discussions either.

RBI ups crude oil, exchange rate baseline assumptions for FY27

MUMBAI, PTI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday said it expects crude oil prices to average $85 per barrel and the rupee to be at 94 against the dollar in FY27.

The central bank has made the projections in the bi-annual Monetary Policy report released on Wednesday.

The crude oil price assumption has been upped to $85 per barrel during FY27, from $70 per barrel during H2FY26. It also increased exchange rate projections to 94 against the US dollar during FY27, from 88 against the greenback during H2FY26, report showed.

"The baseline assumption for crude oil price has been taken at $85 per barrel for FY27 and $75 per barrel for FY28, in line with average Brent future prices," RBI said in a report.

The report added that the International crude oil prices exhibited a declining trend during October-December 2025, easing to around $63 per barrel, owing to OPEC+ announcements, which increased supply in the global oil market. This trend reversed sharply in March 2026, with prices surging past $100 per barrel for the first time since November 2022, driven by escalating geopolitical tensions.

Key Outlook

- Crude oil seen at **$85**/barrel (up from $70 earlier)
- Rupee projected at **94** against US dollar
- Oil surge and global outflows hit rupee

The nominal exchange rate of the Indian rupee was in the range of 87-92 per US dollar during October 2025 to January 2026. Since October 2025 and up to the first half of November, the rupee remained stable, trading around 88 per US dollar.

Towards the end of November, the INR exhibited depreciating bias and reached an all-time low, almost touching 92 per US dollar in the second fortnight of January 2026, driven by portfolio outflows, steady dollar demand and tight global financial conditions.

In March, however, depreciation pressures accentuated with the INR breaching 95 per US dollar intraday, surpassing its previous record lows amid concerns over West Asia conflict.

Interest rate stability offers much-needed breathing room for homebuyers

Realty sector expects increase in construction costs due to rising energy prices

MAHESH KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The RBI's decision to hold the repo rate at 5.25% in a balanced and cautious approach to the ongoing geopolitical situation in West Asia, and has reinforced positive sentiment across the housing market. The real estate industry hailed the move, stating that it will bring stability for current and future home loan borrowers.

"As expected, the RBI kept the repo rate at 5.25% in a balanced and cautious approach to the ongoing geopolitical situation in West Asia. While there are still many unknowns, the recent announcement of a ceasefire gives fresh hope for more stability in future, though the market is still very volatile in the short term," said Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock Group.

Home loan EMIs will remain unchanged, which makes planning for the future easier. This is especially good news for homebuyers, who can now move forward with more confidence, he said.

Anarock Research finds that in the first quarter of 2026, about 1,01,675 units worth Rs 1.51 lakh crore were sold in the top seven cities. This is a 7% drop from the previous quarter, but the continued activity shows that the market is resilient and the fundamentals remain robust.

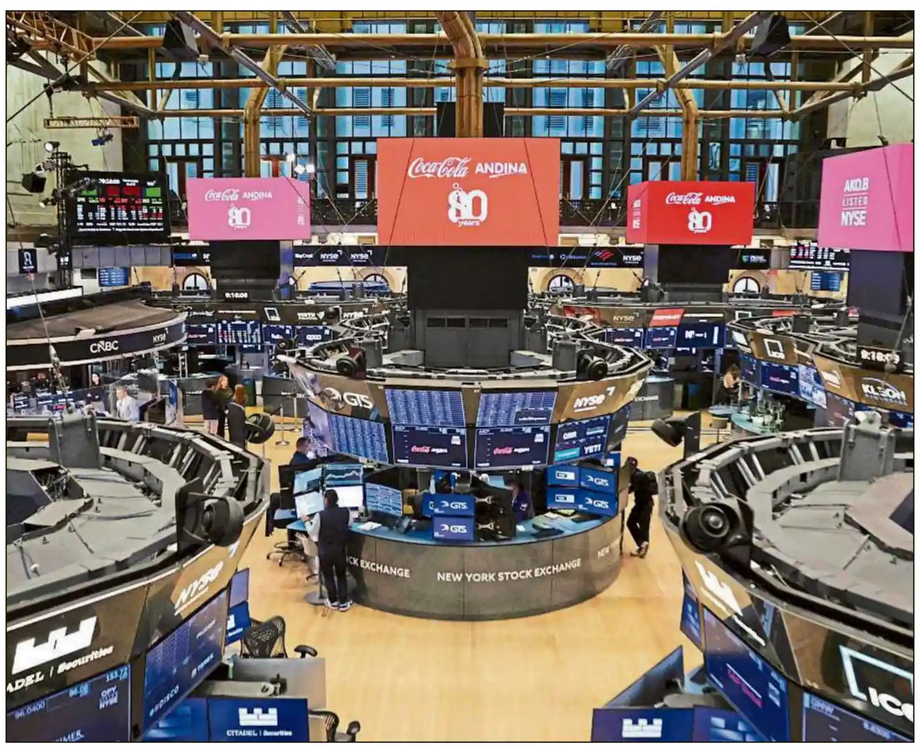
Lata Pillai, Senior MD and Head — Capital Markets, India, JLL, said the repo rate stability provides an insight into the RBI's confidence in India weathering the storm in a calibrated manner and keeping its growth journey intact. "The current approach also works well in the current instance of managing growth, along with the twin focus of inflation and currency management. This will maintain stability in borrowing costs, while aiding consumer spending as well as provide a more certain environment for business," she said.

However, JLL expects an increase in construction costs due to rising energy prices and supply-chain disruptions. In such a scenario, a stable interest rate environment with previous rate cut transmissions still cycling through will lend stability to the residential markets, she added.

Shekhar G Patel, President, CREDAI, said, "We view the RBI's decision to maintain status quo on the repo rate as a balanced and prudent approach, particularly against the backdrop of ongoing global geopolitical tensions and their cascading impact on inflation, supply-chains, and capital flows. A stable interest rate environment provides much-needed visibility to both developers and homebuyers, helping sustain demand momentum across housing segments."

Anuj Sharma, COO, IMGC (India Mortgage Guarantee Corporation), said the RBI's latest policy approach looks less like a routine rate decision and more like a restraint. At a time when the global environment is being disturbed by fresh geopolitical tensions, volatile commodity prices and rising uncertainty, holding the line on rates is not passivity, it is prudence.

MOMENT OF RELIEF



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange during morning trading on Thursday. US stocks surged with the Dow Jones Industrial Average opening over 1,000 points up amid reports of a two-week ceasefire deal between the US, Iran, and Israel. GETTY IMAGES/AFP

Rupee surges 52 paise against USD

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee appreciated 52 paise to close at 92.54 against the US dollar on Wednesday, after US President Donald Trump announced the suspension of military strikes against Iran for two weeks, and the RBI kept the key benchmark rate unchanged with a neutral stance.

Forex traders said investor sentiment got a boost, after Governor Sanjay Malhotra assured that the steps taken on forex do not constitute a structural change.

At the interbank forex, the rupee opened at 92.92 against the US dollar, then gained ground to touch 92.45 against the US dollar during the session and finally ended the day at 92.54 against the greenback, registering an increase of 52 paise over its previous close.

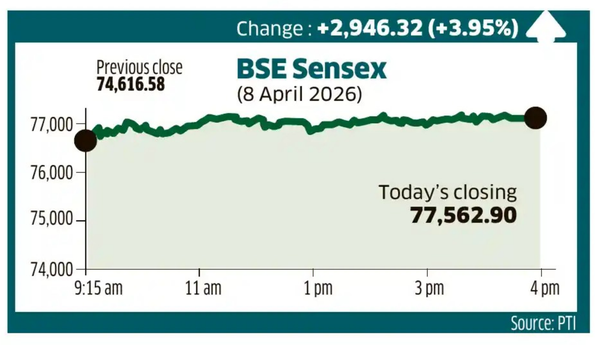
Bulls back in 'charge' on Iran ceasefire

Sensex jumps 2,946.32; its best trading day in 5 yrs

NEW DELHI, PTI

Investors' wealth swelled by Rs 16.25 lakh crore on Wednesday, mirroring a sharp rally in the stock market where the BSE Sensex jumped nearly 4%, after the US and Iran announced a two-week ceasefire.

Rising for the fifth day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 2,946.32 points or 3.95% to settle at 77,562.90, registering its best trading day in five years. During the day, it surged 3,018.96 points or 4% to 77,635.54.



Thanks to the sharp rally in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies surged by Rs 16,25,093.09 crore to Rs 4,45,51,401.85 crore ($4.81 trillion).

The RBI kept its key policy rate unchanged on Wednesday, adopting a wait-and-watch stance as policymakers assessed the fallout from the six-week Iran conflict on energy supplies, inflation and growth.

"The ceasefire has reduced near-term geopolitical uncertainty, supporting risk-on flows into equities — particularly in emerging markets like India, which had witnessed record FII outflows in March," Ajay Menon, MD and CEO – Wealth Management (retail broking and distribution), Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said.

LACK OF PREPAREDNESS

Firms deploy AI faster than they can manage associated risks: Report

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Many firms are deploying AI under pressure, and the risk of pressure-driven AI rollout is exacerbated by governance inconsistencies and unclear responsibility for AI risk that is becoming widespread.

A new global study of 3,700 leaders, including 200 business and IT decision-makers in India, by AI security company TrendAI revealed that nearly 80% of respondents in India have felt pressured to approve AI, despite security concerns, with only 42% of IT managers and 49% of business managers feeling moderately prepared for the pace of IT adoption.

The report said many organisations are still determining their compliance obligations related to AI, and this is challenging in a fragmented global regulatory environment that continues to evolve. It said, in India, this uncertainty is particularly pronounced because preparedness levels remain low even among senior decision-makers.

The research also revealed fragmented ownership of AI risk in India, as among IT decision-makers, there is no clear consensus on who is accountable for AI risk management. It said with the accountability unclear, security gaps are more likely to go unaddressed and pressure to move fast only compounds the problem.

About 80% of respondents feel pressured to approve AI implementations that posed potential security risks.

Costly fix

Resolving vulnerabilities after deployment is far more costly than addressing them earlier in development, and it also introduces new risks to firms. The report also mentioned that AI-powered cybersecurity presents an opportunity for Indian firms to strengthen defences against increasingly sophisticated threats.

Though interest in AI-driven capabilities is high, skepticism around agentic AI systems remains. IT decision-makers cite malicious prompts as their top concern, while business decision-makers worry most about the expanded attack surface for cybercriminals.

Sharda Tickoo, Country Manager, India & SAARC, TrendAI, said, "Organisations are not lacking awareness of risk. They are lacking the structures to act on it. Fragmented ownership, pressure-driven deployment, and limited expertise are creating conditions where AI becomes embedded in critical systems before the controls exist to manage it safely. As organisations move toward more autonomous AI, that gap becomes far harder to close."

Women workers bundle paddy seedlings for transplantation in a field near Ponnampet in Kodagu. PHOTOS BY RAVI SHANKAR

PADDY LEGACY in a coffee landscape

Dhanyata M Poovaiah writes about Kodagu's paddy varieties, festivals linked to the agrarian calendar and traditional rice dishes

Kodagu today is synonymous with its lush, aromatic coffee plantations. But long before coffee arrived with the British, the region's identity was rooted in paddy cultivation.

Kodagu transitioned from paddy to coffee only in the late 20th century, as coffee plantations turned to be more profitable and less labour-intensive. In recent years, real estate development has resulted in the conversion of paddy fields into non-agricultural land.

Yet, rice continues to be the staple diet in Kodagu and remains an important crop, cultivated in around 14,000 hectares in the district. Consequently, the cultural life of the region is intertwined with the various phases of paddy cultivation.

The Kodava New Year, Edmyar Ondh, celebrated in Mid-April, marks the beginning of the paddy cycle. The year is ushered in with ploughing of the paddy fields. During Kodava Kakkada, the peak monsoon month from mid-July to mid-August, paddy saplings are transplanted.

On the 18th day of Kakkada, known as Kakkada Padhinett, *maddh payasa*, a special dessert is prepared from a plant locally called *maddh thoppu* (medicinal plant). This plant (Justicia wynaadensis) is known to have several medicinal properties which helps boost immunity.

The Kailpodh festival, celebrated on September 3 every year, marks the completion of transplantation and offers a period to relax after the hard labour.

Puthari, celebrated in the Birchiyar month between November and December, marks the harvest of paddy.

"Since Kodagu is blessed with abundant rainfall, paddy cultivation is entirely rainfed and cultivated as a single-season Kharif crop in the lowlands," says Dr Prashantha C, Assistant Professor of Entomology and Head of the Agricultural and Horticultural Research Station, Ponnampet.

"From December to March, the focus shifts to coffee harvesting and processing," he adds.

Vasudha and Krishna (in purple) varieties of paddy being cultivated near Ponnampet in Kodagu.

Local paddy varieties, known for their flavour and aroma, are largely grown for self-consumption. "High-yielding varieties meant for commercial use are declining due to reduced returns," adds Dr Prashantha.

Labour shortages and increasing human-animal conflict have also discouraged farmers from continuing paddy cultivation.

However, Kodagu is home to several varieties of paddy even today. Among the indigenous varieties are Jeerige Sanna, BKB developed by agriculturist Baduvanda K Belliappa, Biliya, Rajamudi, Doddi and Boliya while the popular high-yielding varieties include Tunga, KPR-1, Athira, BR-2655, MTU 1001 and IR 64.

"Indigenous varieties such as BKB and Doddi grow up to 3.5 feet in height and are a good source of fodder for the cattle. However, they are low-yielding and require 150 days to mature. High-yielding hybrid varieties such as Athira grow 2 to 2.5 ft and have less straw. These varieties mature at 120 days and usually require mechanical harvesters," says Koniyanda Sanju Somaiah, an agriculturist.

Varietal conservation

According to seed conservationist Ravi Shankar B P, paddy varieties from any part of the country can be grown in Kodagu. Only the yield may vary. He has conserved over 100 varieties of paddy from across the world including the Kala Namak (Buddha rice) from Uttar Pradesh and Magic rice (Komal Saul) from Assam, and wishes to preserve several other unique rice varieties.

"With proper techniques, yields of paddy can be increased fivefold. This involves proper water management and in-situ green manuring. Under this method of manuring, short duration leguminous crops such as cowpea are grown in the field and are incorporated into the soil after sufficient growth, before the paddy saplings are transplanted. This improves soil fertility and its physical, chemical and biological properties, while reducing the need for external manure," says Ravi Shankar.

Local varieties yield around 10–15 quintals per acre, while high-yielding varieties can produce 25–33 quintals per acre.

Paddy cultivation plays a vital ecological role as well. Waterlogged fields can help recharge groundwater, depending on soil and local conditions.

"The rise in the water table ensures that lakes, ponds and streams do not go dry even during summer" says Dr Veerendra K V, Scientist (Plant Protection) at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Gonikoppal.

"Government schemes currently support farmers through subsidies on machinery, paddy seeds, pesticides, bio-fertilisers and green manuring crop seeds. However, increasing the minimum support price and offering other monetary benefits for cultivators will ensure increased paddy cultivation in the region," he adds.

At present, procurement delays and storage challenges continue to deter farmers. While harvesting takes place in November–December, procurement happens only in February–March.

On the table

According to chef Naren Thimmaiah, Kodavas traditionally consumed *pukkalakki* (boiled rice) as their staple. Jeerige Sanna was used to prepare *pulav* and ghee rice on special occasions. However, since the mid-20th century, the white BKB variety has been widely adopted in the region. BKB and Jeerige Sanna varieties are also used to prepare *otti*, *noolputt*, *kadambutt*, *paputt* and *thaliyaputt* and *payasa*.

"In Kodava cuisine, pairing the right curry with the main rice-based dish is essential," adds Naren.

'*Naada mann, naada kool*' (my soil, my rice) is a popular saying in Kodagu, reflecting the belief that instead of abandoning rice cultivation, each family should maintain at least a small patch. "For this, government support is crucial," notes Ravi Shankar.

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to: spectrum@deccanherald.co.in

A tranquil ashrama in Halasuru turns 125

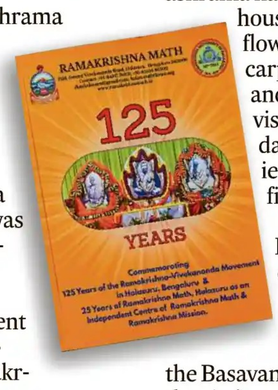
A souvenir chronicles the ashrama's history since the 1900s, when Swami Vivekananda's teachings first inspired a small group in Bengaluru, writes S R Ramakrishna

It is widely known that Chamaraja Wadiyar X, maharaja of Mysuru, was among the patrons who funded Swami Vivekananda's 1893 trip to Chicago to address the World Parliament of Religions.

In a letter from Chicago, the monk thanked the king, and famously said, "(T)he vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive."

Old Mysuru (then spelt Mysore) and Bengaluru have enjoyed a historical connection with the Ramakrishna movement, of which Swami Vivekananda was the foremost proponent.

In Bengaluru, an ashrama located in Halasuru, founded in 1906, celebrated its 125th year with the release of a souvenir in January this year.



Called Vivekananda Ashrama till 1999, it was rechristened Ramakrishna Math that year, when it acquired the status of an independent centre of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission.

Origins

Talks delivered by the charismatic Vivekananda (1863-1902) were winning him followers across India. Out here in Bengaluru, in 1900, a young devotee wrote to the Advaita Ashrama, a branch of the Ramakrishna Mission, for instructions on how to start activities in line with the master's teachings.

Swami Vimalananda, a direct disciple of Swami Vivekananda, responded to him with the details. Thus was born the Vedanta Society in Bengaluru. Many inspired by Swami Vivekananda's teachings came together and rented a cottage in Halasuru (then spelt Ulsoor), and began using it as a centre for prayer and meditation. It was called the Old Mandap.

On May 5, 1906, Swami Vimalananda consecrated the centre with pictures of Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Vivekananda. A memory shared in the ashrama is that, in 1903, 53 bhajana mandalis gathered at the Cantonment railway station to welcome Swami Ramakrishnananda, who steered the south India activities of the math then, as he arrived from Madras (now Chennai). About 4,000 devotees received him, and the groups sang all along the four-hour procession, reminding us of a time when Bengaluru was a stranger to traffic jams and road rage.

Thanks to the efforts of Dr P Venkatarangam and his friends, the 'mandap' was expanded and formally inaugurated on November 17, 1907. That was when it got the name of Vivekananda Ashrama. The medical doctor's family was devoted to the cause, and his daughters had visited Kolkata for initiation into the order. The road on which the ashrama is located is now called Swami Vivekananda Road, and a Namma Metro station nearby is named after it.

Spread across three acres, the ashrama has 30 rooms. It now houses 13 monks. Fragrant flowers from old trees carpet the pathways and welcome the 50-60 visitors who walk in every day. Weekends are busier, with the prayer hall filling up to capacity.

Over the decades, the Halasuru centre has evolved into a space with a distinctive role within the Ramakrishna Mission. While the Basavanagudi math became the city's more visible spiritual hub, Halasuru became a quiet retreat for senior monks.

Some monks have served the Ramakrishna Mission for decades and are now devoted to study and contemplation. The quiet of the Halasuru centre is considered especially conducive to scholastic and educational work.

Among the ashrama's more recent public initiatives are the Sarada Devi Study Centre — 29 cubicles where students can study without distractions. To mark the 125th anniversary, the ashrama gave away 125 cycles to students and funded 125 eye operations. Its 'smart classrooms' are used to address people from specific walks of life — IT engineers were among the invitees for one such season. The ashrama also grants scholarships, and conducts daily yoga classes between 5.40 and 7.40 am.

The souvenir, commemorating 125 years of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement in Bengaluru and 25 years of the Ramakrishna Math in Halasuru, was released by Swami Gautamananda, the 97-year-old president of the Ramakrishna Mission. It contains detailed information about the making of one of Bengaluru's preeminent monastic centres, now headed by Swami Bodhaswarupananda.

A view of the Ramakrishna Math in Halasuru, Bengaluru. DH PHOTO BY PUSHKAR V

A coastal town where spirituality meets leisure

Gokarna comes alive in its many moods as Priyan R Naik explores a landscape shaped by mythology, rituals and the sea

Tucked away on the Arabian Sea coast in Uttara Kannada district, Gokarna draws its charm from a distinct dual identity. It is both an ancient temple town revered by pilgrims and a laid-back beach destination that attracts travellers from around the world.

Gokarna, which literally means 'cow's ear,' is home to three major temples: the Maha Ganapati Temple, the Mahabaleshwar Temple and the Tamragauri Temple, along with several others. Near the temples lies Koti Teertha, a large temple tank surrounded by smaller shrines and pillared corridors. Pilgrims take a dip in this sacred pond, believing its waters purify the body and soul, before visiting the temples.

The temple visits usually begin with the Maha Ganapati Temple. According to mythology, a disguised Lord Ganesha tricked the Lankan king Ravana, compelling him to set down the *Atmalinga* (a *linga* said to represent the soul of Lord Shiva), ensuring it remained in Gokarna. Thus, devotees offer prayers at the Maha Ganapati Temple, seeking Ganesha's blessings before proceeding to the Mahabaleshwar Temple.

Just a few steps from the beach stands the Mahabaleshwar Temple, the spiritual nucleus of the town, with its austere granite walls and *gopuram*. Facing the Arabian Sea, this 4th-century temple, built by Mayuravarma of the Kadamba dynasty, showcases the coastal Karnataka style of architecture. An important Shaivite site, it houses the *Atmalinga* of Lord Shiva on a square Saligrama pedestal. Through a small opening in the pedestal, devotees can glimpse and touch the top of the *Atmalinga*.

Completing this trio is the Tamragauri Temple dedicated to Goddess Parvati. Smaller and quieter, the temple has intricate stone carvings, and oil lamps that keep glowing at dusk. The soft chants of devotees create an atmosphere of sanctity and calm within the temple.

A paradise of beaches

About 100 metres from the Mahabaleshwar temple lies the main beach of Gokarna, with a broad, sandy shoreline. Pilgrims often combine temple visits with moments of quiet by the shore. Southward, a chain of beaches unfolds for those seeking sun, sea and serenity, beginning with Kudle Beach. Tucked between palm groves and low hills, Kudle is one of Gokarna's most loved beaches. Wide and softly curved, the beach is lined with modest shacks, and draws morning walkers and yoga enthusiasts.

A few kilometres away is Om Beach, with a shoreline resembling the 'Om' symbol. From activities like kayaking, boat rides and occasional dolphin-sighting trips, the beach comes alive with water sports, attracting beachgoers and adventure seekers. Further along lies Half Moon Beach, a small crescent-shaped stretch of sand nestled among cliffs. Accessible only by foot or boat, it is quieter than its neighbouring beaches. At the southernmost end of this chain is Paradise Beach with a rugged yet pristine shoreline. A boat ride to this 'paradise' is itself part of an experience, rewarding visitors with a sense of discovery.

Once a quiet temple town, Gokarna now pulses with a striking contrast, austere at sunrise and electric by sunset. Its temples, beaches, guesthouses, eateries and bustling markets fuel livelihoods while keeping the town's culture and heritage alive. It reflects a modern India that seeks spirituality and tradition as much as leisure. It is a place where pilgrims cross paths with 'Gen Z' backpackers.

Kudle Beach, one of Gokarna's popular tourist spots; the Maha Ganapati Temple; Koti Teertha, a large temple tank surrounded by smaller shrines, and pillared corridors. PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

IN BRIEF

Nithin brace in AHC victory

▸ Nithin netted a brace while Govindraj and Naeem scored a goal each as Ashco Hockey Club beat Bangalore Friends Hockey Club 4-2 in the KSHA 'B' Division Hockey League Championship in Bengaluru on Wednesday, reports DHNS.

Results: Ashco Hockey Club: 4 (Nithin 16th, 53rd, Govindraj 17th, Naeem 48th) bt Bangalore Friends Hockey Club: 2 (Suresh 14th, Naresh Babu 56th); Ideal Sports Academy: 4 (Bopanna 20th, 49th, Prathik 37th, Bopanna B 46th) drew with Garudda Hockey Club: 4 (Suresh Babu 15th, Hari Krishnan 21st, Hari Haran 28th, Naveen Kumar 44th).

India win to stay alive

▸ The Indian U-20 women's team kept alive their hopes of qualifying for the AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup 2026 knockout stage, defeating Chinese Taipei 3-1 in their final Group C match on Wednesday, reports PTI from Pathum Thani.

It was India's first win in the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup since 2004.

Doha DL meet postponed

▸ The Diamond League athletics meeting in Doha has been postponed for six weeks and will now take place on June 19 due to the war in the Middle East, organisers announced Wednesday, reports AFP from Paris.

The United States and Iran agreed on Tuesday a two-week ceasefire to the war that has killed thousands and hammered the global economy.

Lucescu, one of Romania's greatest footballers

Mircea Lucescu
1945 - 2026

BUCHAREST, AP: Mircea Lucescu, the Romanian football great who was a serial trophy winner as a player and a coach, has died at the age of 80.

Lucescu's death was confirmed by Bucharest University Emergency Hospital on Tuesday. He had been hospitalised after reportedly suffering a heart attack on Friday morning.

"Mr Mircea Lucescu was one of the most successful Romanian football coaches and players, the first to qualify the Romanian national team for a European Championship, in 1984," the hospital said in a statement. "Entire generations of Romanians grew up with his image in their hearts, as a national symbol."

Lucescu had a lengthy coaching career and was in his second spell with the Romanian national team until stepping down last Thursday after falling ill during training. Three days earlier, Romania had missed out on qualification to the World Cup after losing to Turkey in a playoff.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

IPL: Kolkata Knight Riders vs Lucknow Super Giants (**7:30 pm**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHostar.**

FOOTBALL

Europa League (quarterfinal leg-1): Freiburg vs Celta, Porto vs Nottingham Forest, Bologna vs Aston Villa (**all 12:30 am, Friday**). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

ISL: Jamshedpur FC vs Mumbai City FC (**7:30 pm**). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network & FanCode.**

GOLF

Augusta Masters: Round 1 (**10:30 pm**). **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

TENNIS

Monte Carlo Masters: Round of 16 (**1:30 pm**). **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Brilliant Bayern have their noses in front

Bavarians edge Real Madrid 2-1 in gripping quarterfinal first leg clash

MADRID, AFP

Luis Diaz and Harry Kane scored the goals that gave dominant Bayern Munich a crucial 2-1 Champions League quarterfinal first-leg win away to Real Madrid on Tuesday.

Kylian Mbappe's strike 16 minutes from time gave record 15-time winners Real a lifeline at their Bernabeu home in a gripping battle.

Vincent Kompany's side, arguably the strongest team in Europe this season, produced a masterclass in the first half and could have been several goals ahead.

Instead, they had only one from Diaz, which Kane added to after the interval, but French superstar Mbappe's goal kept Alvaro Arbeloa's side in the tie.

The round's glamour fixture was a European classic -- a record 29th time these heavyweights have faced each other in the competition.

Bayern flew out of the blocks and Konrad Laimer's rasping effort narrowly over the bar showed that Kompany's side had come to the Spanish capital to attack.

After nine consecutive matches against Madrid without a win, Bayern were determined to put an end to that streak and show why many consider them favourites to lift the trophy this season.

Bayern should have taken the lead through defender Dayot Upamecano, who fluffed his lines from point-blank range, after Kane cushioned the ball into his path, allowing Alvaro Carreras to hack the ball off the line.

Madrid were largely pinned back as Bayern dominated the ball, but the hosts sought to send through rapid strikers Mbappe and Vinicius Junior on the counter, with Manuel Neuer saving from both.

Madrid's defensive work was nearly undone by a moment of madness from 18-year-old midfielder Thiago Pitarch, starting in place of Jude Bellingham, whose poor back pass under pressure was straight to Serge Gnabry in front of goal, but goalkeeper Andriy Lunin deflected the German's shot behind.

Bayern toyed at times with Real, who ceded possession far too often, and their opening goal was a slick combination play which caught the hosts on their heels.

Gnabry exchanged a one-two with Kane and pushed the ball in behind Trent Alexander-Arnold for the Madrid defender's former Liverpool team-mate Diaz to reach and stroke home past Lunin in the 41st minute.

Kane, who was a doubt to start because of an ankle problem, did not seem fully fit but made an even bigger impact less than a minute into the second half. Olise cut the ball back to him on the edge of the box and Kane fizzed a curling effort into the bottom corner to double Bayern's lead.

It was his 11th Champions League strike this season, trailing only Mbappe on 14, and his 49th goal across all competitions.

Vinicius had a fine chance to pull one back for Real when Upamecano badly underhit a header back to Neuer, but the Brazilian sliced his shot into the side-netting. With Bellingham on as a substitute, Madrid stepped up a level and eventually found the net with Alexander-Arnold guiding a low cross to the far post where Mbappe beat Neuer, smashing home off the crossbar after 74 minutes.

Bayern Munich's Luis Diaz (left) celebrates after scoring the opening goal against Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu on Tuesday. AFP

Arsenal steal a win

Kai Havertz snatched a last-gasp winner as Arsenal bounced back from their domestic distress to steal a 1-0 victory at Sporting Lisbon in the Champions League quarterfinal first leg on Tuesday.

Mikel Arteta's side arrived at the Jose Alvalade Stadium rocked by successive defeats against Manchester City in the League Cup final and Southampton in the FA Cup quarterfinals.

Once again, the Gunners were below their best but they emerged with the win thanks to David Raya's fine saves and Havertz's clinical finish in stoppage-time.

Arsenal will be firm favourites to advance to the semifinals in the second leg in north London on April 15, but they will have to improve significantly to win the tournament for the first time.

Results (Quarterfinals, first legs): Real Madrid: 1 (Mbappe 74th) lt to Bayern Munich: 2 (Diaz 41st, Kane 46th); Sporting Lisbon: 0 lt to Arsenal: 1 (Havertz 90+1).

Berrettini double-bagels Medvedev

MONTE CARLO, AFP: Daniil Medvedev slipped to an embarrassing 6-0, 6-0 thrashing by Matteo Berrettini in the Monte Carlo Masters second round on Wednesday, as Alexander Zverev dug deep to beat Cristian Garin.

Medevdev completely unravelled against Berrettini after missing two break points in the opening game, making 30 unforced errors and serving five double faults.

Medvedev did not win more than two points in any of the last 11 games and his frustrations boiled over in the second set, smashing his racquet into the court four times.

Berrettini wrapped up the double-bagel victory, the first such defeat of former world number one Medvedev's career, in just 49 minutes.

The former Wimbledon runner-up, now ranked 90th, will face Joao Fonseca in the last 16 after the Brazilian teenager beat Arthur Rinderknech 7-5, 4-6, 6-3.

World No. 3 Zverev, who is hoping to complete the set of all three clay-court Masters 1000 titles this week, staged a late comeback to edge out Chilean qualifier Garin 4-6, 6-4, 7-5.

Indian TT girls, boys begin on winning note

SHIMLA, PTI: Indian girls stamped their authority with a 3-0 victory over Sri Lanka, while the boys routed Maldives by a similar margin to begin their campaign in the ITTF-ATTU Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships on a winning note here on Wednesday.

Having received a higher seeding, the Indian U-19 girls made an immediate impact. Jennifer Varghese, Ananya Muralidharan, and Prisha Goel registered straight or four-game wins to complete a comprehensive sweep against Sri Lanka.

The Under-19 girls remain the only category competing for qualification to the Asian Youth Championships. However, the continental event, originally slated for June in Muscat, has been postponed owing to the West Asia crisis.

Results (U-19 girls): India bt Sri Lanka 3-0 (Jennifer Varghese bt Shamaisha 12-10 11-8 11-9, Ananya Muralidharan bt Tamadi 11-7 11-7 12-10, Prisha Goel bt Sandin Mudiyanselage 8-11 11-4 11-5 11-9).

U-15 boys: India bt Maldives 3-0 (Aditya Das bt Mlohamed Rafiu 11-3 11-3 11-2, Akshay Kirikara bt Faaz Latheef 11-2 11-5 11-2, Akash Rajavelu bt Ayoob Saleem 11-4 11-6 11-3).

Vaishnavi, Sahaja shine as India bounce back in style

NEW DELHI, PTI

Young debutant Vaishnavi Adkar and Sahaja Yamalapalli notched up convincing wins as India bounced back in style, blanking New Zealand 3-0 in their second Asia/Oceania Group I tie of the Billie Jean King Cup here on Wednesday.

Vaishnavi and Sahaja had endured contrasting defeats as India went down 1-2 to Thailand in their rain-hit opener.

However, the hosts scripted a swift turnaround, with both players showing composure under pressure in their respective singles matches against New Zealand, who are without their star player Lulu Sun.

Entrusted with the responsibility again, Vaishnavi showed marked improvement, executing her shots with far greater control to outplay Aishi Das 6-2 6-4 in one hour and 30 minutes.

Sahaja then outclassed Valentina Ivanov 6-1 6-3 in the second singles to keep their campaign alive.

In the doubles, Rutuja Bhosale and Ankita Raina recorded a 6-4 6-2 win over the combination of world No. 11 Erin Routliffe and world no. 338 Monique Barry to complete the drubbing.

Vaishnavi capitalised on Das' inconsistency to take control of the opening set.

Despite trailing 15-40 early on serve, the Indian earned the first break as Das squandered a 40-15 lead with a string of errors. She then held through a tight deuce battle to go 2-0 ahead.

Vaishnavi showed resilience under pressure in the third game, saving two break points, and maintained her advantage as both players held their serve

Sahaja Yamalapalli defeated New Zealand's Valentina Ivanov 6-1, 6-3 in the second singles tie in the Billie Jean King Cup Asia/Oceania Group I tournament in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

Baseline slugfest

In yet another heavy baseline slugfest, Sahaja played some superb forehand drives and looked in good touch as she took the court again for the second time on Wednesday.

She broke her opponent in the first game itself after converting two break points. The Indian was then broken by Valentina but she broke back again in the third game to go 2-1 up.

Deepika, Savita back for Argentina tour

NEW DELHI, PTI: Salima Tete will continue to lead India, while drag-flicker Deepika and experienced goalkeeper Savita make a comeback to the 24-member national women's hockey squad announced on Wednesday for the tour of Argentina later this month.

The tour will also see the return of defender Jyoti and forward Mumtaz Khan, strengthening both ends of the field. India will play four matches against Argentina from April 13 to 17 in Buenos Aires in what will be a key exposure tour ahead of the World Cup and the Asian Games later this year.

Head coach Sjoerd Marijne said the tour would be crucial in testing combinations and building squad depth.

Indian squad: Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam. **Defenders:** Nikki Pradhan, Ishika Chaudhary, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Manisha Chauhan, Lalthantluangi, Jyoti, Udita. **Midfielders:** Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Sakshi Rana, Sunelita Toppo, Salima Tete (capt), Neha, Deepika Soreng, Rutuja Dadaso Pisal, Ishika. **Forwards:** Baljeet Kaur, Navneet Kaur, Deepika, Annu, Beauty Dungdung, Lalremsiami, Mumtaz Khan.

Attacking Ayush leaves Shi Feng in tatters

NINGBO (CHINA), PTI: India's rising star Ayush Shetty shocked world No. 7 Li Shi Feng of China while former World Champion PV Sindhu and veteran HS Prannoy progressed to the pre-quarterfinals at the Badminton Asia Championships here on Wednesday.

Shetty, the 2025 US Open champion, beat Chinese star Li 21-13, 21-16 in 51 minutes.

Despite Li's strong start in both games, the Indian youngster dominated the later stages to advance to the round of 16.

In the opening game, Ayush fought back early to level at 4-4, with Li holding a slight edge until 7-7. From there, Ayush overpowered the home favourite to take the game 21-13.

The second game followed a similar pattern, with Li pressing hard early on.

Ayush fought back to level the score multiple times and took charge at 13-13, winning six straight points to close out the match 21-16. He will next face Chi Yu Jen of Chinese Taipei.

Sindhu defeated Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching in women's singles 15-21, 21-11, 21-19 in 57 minutes.

She will next face world No. 2 Wang Zhi Yi of China in the pre-quarterfinals both having 3-3 win-loss record in past meetups.

In men's singles, the seasoned Prannoy beat Nguyen Hai Dang of Vietnam 24-22, 21-12 in 47 minutes.

He will meet Hong Yang of China in the pre-quarterfinals after the latter received a walkover in the opening round.

Lakshya Sen, Kidambi Srikanth, Malvika Bansod and Tanvi Sharma exited in the opening round.

India's Ayush Shetty stunned world No. 7 Li Shi Feng on Wednesday.

Garadi mane to national podium: A Siddi sporting success

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Juliana Pedru Fernandes of the Siddi community, a Scheduled Tribe, recalls how her distinct physical appearance often made her a target of racial slurs in her neighbourhood of Haliyal in Uttara Kannada.

Hearing derogatory remarks, including the N-word, would leave her furious, sometimes to the point of responding physically.

"It was upsetting to hear those words; even the term 'Siddi' began to irritate me. I even ended up hitting a few of them just to teach them a lesson," Juliana says with a chuckle.

Little did she know that over two decades later, her daughter Princeta Siddi would take up a combative sport like wrestling and give the community a reason to celebrate its identity and legacy which dates back to 628 CE, when the Siddis -- primarily descendents from Bantu people of Southeast Africa -- are believed to have been brought to the Indian subcontinent by Arab traders.

Princeta carried that legacy at the recent Khelo India Tribal Games, clinching gold in the women's 68kg category in dominant fashion. She wasn't alone. Manisha Juava Siddi (76kg) and Rohan M. Doddamani (Greco-Roman 60kg) also won gold, while Shalina Siddi secured a silver.

While Princeta grabbed the spotlight, coaches from the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports (DYES) see Shalina as one for the future. The 20-year-old, who grew up helping her father on farms in Jatgahosur, has been training at the centre since fifth standard and has lived in the hostel ever since.

"I took up wrestling early because I was inspired by my sister, who is also a national medallist," says Shalina, who won bronze at the Khelo India University Games in Rajasthan last year. "My coach told me I had the physique for wrestling, and I agreed."

Another hostel-mate, Rohan, now hopes to move elsewhere in search of better training facilities, citing the lack of quality sparring partners. Having lost his father, a porter, five years ago, he is also driven by the need to support his family. His mother works as a cook at a government school in Hubballi.

From left: Shalina Siddi, Princeta Siddi, coach Mamata, Manisha Siddi and Rohan Doddamani (right) at the recently-concluded Khelo India Tribal Games in Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh.

"I want to become a better wrestler, and I feel I need to train elsewhere to improve," says the 22-year-old. "I also want to find a job soon so I can support my mother."

Born into hardship, the medal-winning group showed little complaint while travelling in packed unreserved compartments on their way to Chhattisgarh, and later on partially reserved tickets during the return journey. Coming back as champions, however, made the overnight trip memorable.

Karnataka is home to nearly one-third of India's Siddi population (estimated at 17,000–18,000) largely settled in Uttara Kannada, Belagavi, and Dharwad districts. The community was recognised as a Scheduled Tribe in 2003 and is listed among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Yet, such recognition has not erased everyday prejudice.

"That's common for me. I'm often called African because of my skin colour or asked which country I'm from," says a shy Princeta, who tries not to let such remarks affect her.

For her, wrestling has become both refuge and response -- a space to shut out the noise and prove herself. Training at JSW Vijayanagar after catching the attention of coaches last year, Princeta is part of a deeper wrestling tradition within the Siddi community.

That legacy is often traced back to the 1970s and Agnel Negro, a celebrated wrestler who became a household name among the Siddis. Stories of his exploits -- including a purported bout against 1968 world champion Dara Singh -- continue to be passed down, inspiring generations to step into the 'garadi mane', the traditional mud-wrestling arena.

Over time, wrestling became embedded in the community's way of life, with people across age groups frequenting these mud pits. For long, however, women's participation remained limited due to social stigma.

That began to change after 2000, particularly with the inclusion of women's wrestling in the Dasara Games in Mysuru. A more structured shift came in 2015 with the establishment of the Sri Jayaprakash Narayan National Youth Training Centre under the DYES. This initiative introduced young athletes to modern mat-based wrestling. The centre now trains several Siddi athletes, including Shalina and Manisha. Coaches believe Siddi wrestlers possess natural physical attributes suited to combative sports.

While talent identification has improved, these athletes are still far from finished products. This gap becomes evident at the national level, where powerhouses like Haryana and Uttar Pradesh remain far ahead.

Bridging that gap will require sustained effort. Perhaps it can begin with something simple—ensuring that medal-winning athletes do not have to travel in unreserved train compartments.

10m air pistol shooters flop, 25m pistol women in hunt

GRANADA (SPAIN), PTI: Indian shooters endured a disappointing outing in the men's 10m air pistol event at the ISSF Pistol/Rifle World Cup here on Wednesday, with all three participants failing to qualify for the finals, just a day after clinching the mixed team gold with a world-record performance.

Young Mukesh Nelavalli, who had shattered the world record en route to winning gold in the 10m air pistol mixed team event on the opening day on Tuesday, finished 14th with an aggregate score of 579, missing out on the eight-shooter final by a considerable margin.

On a day when even world No. 1 Hu Kai of China struggled -- finishing 15th with a score of 578M -- Mukesh was undone by two subpar series of 94 and 95 in the opening and closing rounds. In between, he posted solid scores of 98, 98, 97, and 97 in the six-series qualification stage.

Paris Olympics gold medallist Yu Xie delivered a superb performance, shooting 588 to top the qualifying round and advance to the finals in first place, with series scores of 98, 99, 97, 98, 99, and 97.

Ujjawal Malik finished 22nd with a total of 577 (95, 96, 96, 97, 95, 98).

IPL 2026

10 TEAMS 13 VENUES 58 DAYS 74 MATCHES

"I would not put this game on the batting. The bowling unit had to take responsibility. It is always about bowling those good balls. If we would have executed, we would have been in the game.

HARDIK PANDYA, MI CAPTAIN

Miller blunder costs DC dear

Rahul's 92 goes in vain as GT post first win of season

NEW DELHI, PTI

Gujarat Titans secured their first win of the season following a roller coaster last over as a rampaging David Miller's momentary indiscretion cost Delhi Capitals dearly in an IPL match here on Wednesday. Miller refused the single off the penultimate delivery of the final bowled by Prasidh Krishna, underlining his lack of trust in partner Kuldeep Yadav. Prasidh bowled a pace-off slower, which Miller missed, and Jos Buttler, having taken one glove off, broke down the stumps before Kuldeep could make it.

Delhi Capitals finished agonizingly short on 209 for 8 in pursuit of 211.

Jos Buttler (52 off 27) returned to his ballistic ways with a six laden half century before captain Shubman Gill (70 off) and Washington Sundar (55 off 32) powered Gujarat Titans to 210 for four.

Rahul (92 off 52) and Pathum Nissanka (41 off 24) provided an ideal platform for Delhi Capitals with a 76-run stand off 49 balls. However, Rashid Khan struck thrice in the middle overs to wrest the momentum from Delhi Capitals.

Titans had all under control until the 19th over with the home needing 36 off the last two overs.

It was a tough ask but with Miller (41 not out off 20) returning to the centre after treating his finger in the dressing room, there was hope.

Miller singlehandedly brought back Delhi Capitals in the game with a couple of cracking sixes and a four in a 23-run penultimate over from Mohammed Siraj.

With majority of Titans pacers' proving expensive on the night, the experienced Prasidh Krishna was left to defend 13 off the last six balls.

Vipraj Nigam departed after a four off the first ball, leaving Miller with 8 to get off the last three balls.

What followed was mammoth hit over long-off that almost sealed the deal for Delhi Capitals. Such was Miller's state of mind that he refused a single on the penultimate ball and that proved to be decisive in the end.

With 2 needed off the final ball, Prasidh went for a slow bouncer that was not connected by Miller, who went for the run leaving Kuldeep Yadav short of his crease.

The review was called for a wide but it was deemed a fair delivery, leaving Miller disappointed. It was the first loss of the season for Delhi Capitals in as many games while Titans finally logged home full points in third attempt.

Earlier, Buttler smashed five sixes at the Kotla. Four of those maximums came off medium pacer Mukesh Kumar (2/55 in 4 overs), who had an off day after starring in the previous game against Mumbai Indians.

Buttler went hard at Mukesh in the fifth over of the innings, collecting 23 runs via three hits that went all the way.

One was over fine leg after he shuffled across the stumps, the second was a massive strike that reached the top tier of the "Gautam Gambhir Stand" and three balls later, he targetted the extra cover region.

Buttler"s onslaught helped Delhi Capitals reached 68 for one in the powerplay. He was dismissed against the run of play, off a long hop from Kuldeep Yadav.

Rashid Khan (left) picked up 3/17 to help Gujarat Titans beat Delhi Capitals in a high-scoring affair at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi on Wednesday. AFP

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT TITANS: Sai Sudharsan b Mukesh 12, Shubman Gill c Rana b Ngidi 70, Jos Buttler b Kuldeep 52, Washington Sundar c Rana b Mukesh 55, Glenn Phillips (not out) 14, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 1. Extras (W-5, NB-1) 6. **TOTAL (for 4 wkts, 20 overs) 210.**

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-79, 3-183, 4-205.

Bowling: Mukesh Kumar 4-0-55-2, Lungi Ngidi 4-0-24-1, Axar Patel 3-0-32-0, Kuldeep Yadav 4-0-42-1, T Natarajan 4-0-34-0, Vipraj Nigam 1-0-23-0.

DELHI CAPITALS: Pathum Nissanka c Tewatia b Prasidh 41, KL Rahul c Buttler b Siraj 92, Nitish Rana c Sudharsan b Rashid 5, Sameer Rizvi b Rashid 0, David Miller (not out) 41, Axar Patel c Phillips b Rashid 2, Tristan Stubbs run out Sudharsan 7, Vipraj Nigam c Gill, b Prasidh 12, Kuldeep Yadav run out Buttler 1. Extras (W-8). **TOTAL (for 8 wkts, 20 overs) 209.**

Fall of wickets: 1-76, 2-101, 3-101, 4-134, 5-160, 6-166, 7-202, 8-209

Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 4-0-52-1, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-32-0, Rashid Khan 4-0-17-3, Ashok Sharma 3-0-45-0, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-52-2, Washington Sundar 1-0-11-0.

Result: GT won by 1 run.

PoM: Rashid Khan

Knight Riders brace up for a Shami sizzler

Beleaguered Kolkata take on Lucknow in search of first win

KOLKATA, PTI

Out of tune and bereft of ideas, Kolkata Knight Riders may ring in sweeping changes in search of their first win of the season when they face a Mohammed Shami-inspired Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL here on Thursday.

Shami is fresh from his outstanding 2/9 against Sunrisers Hyderabad, where he dismissed Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head in successive overs -- the same duo who had battered KKR the other day.

The 'local' man Shami, a fine exponent of straight seam bowling and movement, will relish the conditions at Eden Gardens and could emerge as a key threat for a KKR who are yet to win after three matches.

A glimpse of what to expect was seen on Monday when PBKS' Australian speedster Xavier Bartlett showed how effective straight seam bowling can be on a grassy Eden pitch, blowing away KKR's top order by dismissing overseas duo Finn Allen and Cameron Green in the space of three balls.

From 16/2 in two overs, KKR were fortunate to escape with a point after their match against Punjab Kings was washed out.

Because of a trough stretching from Gangetic West Bengal to the Gulf of Mannar, rain has been a constant over the past three days and is forecast around late Wednesday and early Thursday.

However, being a late 7.30 pm start, the match is unlikely to be affected much, which should lift the mood.

LSG, meanwhile, will be buoyed by their recent win, especially with the way Rishabh Pant, batting at No. 3, showed maturity and game awareness to anchor the chase with an unbeaten 68.

The LSG also boast of Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram in top-three as their match-up against struggling KKR bowlers would be a key.

LSG's in-form pacer Mohammed Shami will be looking to wreck KKR when the two sides clash on Thursday. REUTERS

LIVE 7:30 PM

'MI blown away by Sooryavanshi, Jaiswal magic'

GUWAHATI, PTI: Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene admitted his side was blown off course by a blistering onslaught from Rajasthan Royals openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, saying the bowlers missed their lines and lengths on a night when even Jasprit Bumrah "probably missed the length by a little bit".

Mahela Jayawardene

Mumbai Indians suffered a 27-run defeat in a rain-curtailed IPL clash as Jaiswal and Sooryavanshi lit up the night with a blistering display that powered Rajasthan Royals to 150 for 3 in 11 overs before their bowlers tightened the screws to restrict Mumbai Indians to 123 for 9 on Tuesday night.

This was MI's second loss after starting the season with a win over Kolkata Knight Riders.

"We were not good enough, and that's what we have to work on. I think we had some plans, but...we never executed those plans the way we wanted."

POINTS TABLE

Team	Played	Won	Lost	NR	Pts	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	3	3	0	0	6	2.403
Punjab Kings	3	2	0	1	5	0.637
Royal Challengers	2	2	0	0	4	2.501
Delhi Capitals	3	2	1	0	4	0.811
Sunrisers Hyderabad	3	1	2	0	2	0.275
Gujarat Titans	3	1	2	0	2	-0.270
Lucknow Super Giants	2	1	1	0	2	-0.542
Mumbai Indians	3	1	2	0	2	-0.715
Kolkata Knight Riders	3	0	2	1	1	-1.964
Chennai Super Kings	3	0	3	0	0	-2.517

'MI lacked purpose'

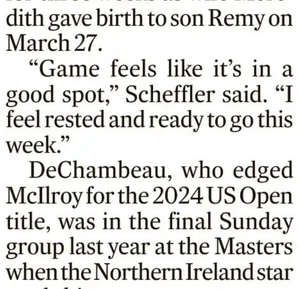
NEW DELHI, PTI

Mumbai Indians appeared to lack intent and purpose in their 27-run defeat to Rajasthan Royals, said former India captain Anil Kumble as he lauded young swashbuckler Vaibhav Sooryavanshi for his "brilliant" offensive against pace ace Jasprit Bumrah in an IPL clash in Guwahati.

RR cruised to the comfortable win over Hardik Pandya's Mumbai Indians, powered by Yashasvi Jaiswal's scintillating unbeaten 77 and Sooryavanshi's 14-ball blitzkrieg of 39. Their performance set the tone for a 150-run total in the rain-shortened 11-overs-a-side contest.

Mumbai Indians fell well short, restricted to 123 for 9, with their entire top order failing to make an impact. This was Rajasthan Royals' third consecutive win, while MI endured their second loss in three matches.

"It felt like the MI lacked a bit of purpose and intent with the ball, and that certainly spilled over into the batting. It was always going to be a big task to score 151 in 11 overs," said Kumble on JioStar.



Anil Kumble

Jaiswal praises Sooryavanshi

GUWAHATI, PTI: Amazed by Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's seemingly effortless takedown of Jasprit Bumrah, Rajasthan Royals batter Yashasvi Jaiswal said his 15-year-old opening partner eased the pressure on him in the 27-run IPL win over Mumbai Indians on a rain-soaked evening here.

The talking point before the match was the first face-off between the redoubtable pacer and the teen sensation, and Sooryavanshi lived up to the hype, smashing an incoming Bumrah 131kph delivery on for a first-ball six over mid-on.

"Bumrah bhai is one of the legends, so if he's scoring against him, it's amazing."

Mysore A beat Bangalore Sporting 88-20

BENGALURU, DHNS: Mysore District A defeated Bangalore Sporting 88-20 in a lopsided affair during the State Women's Basketball League Championship at Sree Kanteerava stadium courts on Wednesday.

LOCAL BASKETBALL

In an all-round effort by the team, Sahana bagged 12 of the Mysore's points while Vaishnavi picked almost half of his side's points (9) for the losing cause.

Results: Mounts Club: 75 (Ananya 22 points, Avni 12) bt MCHS: 46 (Saanvi 20); HT: 36-23. Mysore District A: 88 (Sahana 12) bt Bangalore Sporting: 20 (Vaishnavi 9); HT: 39-11. Southern Blues: 55 (Diya 15) bt Devanga Union: 24 (Shrishti 9); Ht 28-14. Appaiah BC: 65 (Tia 15, Hiranmayi 10) bt Vijayapura District: 51 (Lalitha 20, Shreya 10); HT: 32-20. Dharwad District A: 35 (Deepika 20) bt MNK Rao Park: 23 (Mahima 9); HT: 19-12. JSC: 58 (Sanjana 23, Aadhya 21) bt Bharath SU: 25 (Archana 9); HT: 33-12. DYES Vidyanagar: 45 (Vibha 12) bt YMMA: 36 (Tanvi 7); HT: 35-13. Bangalore Vanguards: 59 (Aarushi 18, Tisha 16) bt Kolar District: 12; HT: 35-8. Mounts Club: 49 (Sridevi 13, Ananya 10) bt AVBC: 24 (Chirantha 8); HT: 29-9. Mysore District A: 61 (Sahana 12) bt Hoop 7: 19 (Dhanyashree 11); HT: 31-8. Appaiah: 39 (Moulya 9) bt BCYA: 25 (Tharunya 9); HT: 19-8; Young Orion's: 72 (Vyoma 19, Sarayu 17) bt HBR BC: 27 (Diya 12); HT: 42-12. DYES Vidyanagar: 50 (Chaitra 13, Vibha 10) bt Pattabhiram: 20 (Anagha 6); HT: 26-8. Vimanapura: 56 (Shreya 16, Shwetha 15) bt Dharwad district A: 16 (Deepika 12); HT: 36-10. Vivek's SC: 53 (Pavithra 18, Jayashree 13) bt Southern Blues: 49 (Anvitha 20, Vibha 10); HT: 24-23. Koramangala SC: 31 (Saloni 13) bt Kolar District: 23 (Abhinaya 11); HT: 14-11.

Vaishali in joint lead

PAPHOS (CYPRUS), PTI

R Vaishali kept Indian hopes alive defeating compatriot Divya Deshmukh in the ninth round of the womens Candidates Chess Tournament here on Wednesday.

After what could be best prescribed as a sedate start, Vaishali has been pushing hard for a win in every game but this victory kept her in lead alongside Jiner Zhu of China on 5.5 points out of a possible eight.

With five more rounds to come in the women's competition, early leader Anna Muzychuk is in close pursuit of the two leaders a half point behind while Divya, Kateryna Lagno and Bibisara Assuabayeva are not far behind.

The one player out of contention here is former world women's champion Zhongyi Tan, who is still looking for the winning touch.

In the open section, Anish Giri almost ended the hopes of pre-event favourite Fabiana Caruana of the United States scoring a brilliant win yet again.

R Vaishali beat compatriot Divya Deshmukh to share lead with Jiner Zhu at the end of round 9 in the Candidates tournament on Wednesday. FILE PHOTO

The leader Javokhir Sindarov played the catch-me-if-you-can game with the followers as he took another draw, albeit, hard fought against Matthias BLuebaum of Germany.

As things stand in the open section, Sindarov has seven points from nine games and he is only followed by Giri of Holland, who has reinvented himself to be on 5.5 points.

It remains to be seen if Giri can catch up with Sindarov but the Uzbek has three games out of the remaining five with white pieces now.

R Praggnanadhaa tried to prove a point against Wei Yi of China but the Indian clearly spoiled a much better position in the middle game.

Results round 9: Open: R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 2) playing Wei Yi (Chn, 3.5); Anish Giri (Ned, (5.5) beat Fabiano Caruana (USA, 4,5) Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 7) drew with Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 4); Hikaru Nakamura (USA, 3) playing Andrey Esipenko (Rus, 2.5). **Women:** R Vaishali (Ind, 5.5) beat Divya Deshmukh (Ind, 4.5); Jiner Zhu (Chn, 5.5) beat Kateryna Lagno (Rus, 4.5)); Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus, 4) drew with Bibisara Assuabayeva (Kaz, 4); Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 5) drew with Zhongyi Tan (Chn, 3).

McIlroy chases historic repeat

AUGUSTA (US), AFP: Rory McIlroy seeks a historic repeat victory starting Thursday at the 90th Masters, while world number one Scottie Scheffler and Bryson DeChambeau lead a host of challengers in firm and fast conditions.

Second-ranked McIlroy completed a career Grand Slam by capturing the green jacket at Augusta National last year, but only Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo and Tiger Woods have won back-to-back green jackets, Woods the most recent in 2001-2002.

"Maybe not the largest field in golf but it's the strongest," McIlroy said. "I know that I can do it now, so that should make it a little easier for me to go out and play the golf I want to play."

McIlroy suffered an injury scare last month when back pain prompted his withdrawal at Bay Hill.

But he competed the following week and has rested since.

"I've taken the last three weeks to make sure I'm 100 percent coming in here, which I am," McIlroy said.

"I feel comfortable on the golf course, feel comfortable with my game. It has been a good three weeks at home getting ready physically and mentally and just trying to prepare for everything this week is going to throw at me."

Scheffler, last year's British Open and PGA Championship winner, has failed in two Masters repeat bids.

"Defending can always be difficult, but I think that's mostly just the odds of winning a tournament in back-to-back years," Scheffler said.

"That's just extremely challenging, especially when you look at these major championships."

Rory McIlroy. AFP

LIVE 10:30 PM, FANCODE

Scheffler, the 2022 and 2024 Masters winner, has been off for three weeks as wife Meredith gave birth to son Remy on March 27.

"Game feels like it's in a good spot," Scheffler said. "I feel rested and ready to go this week."

DeChambeau, who edged McIlroy for the 2024 US Open title, was in the final Sunday group last year at the Masters when the Northern Ireland star made history.

"It's great if we can continue to have a rivalry," DeChambeau said. "It kind of helps create more buzz around the game of golf.

"It's one of those things like I got him at Pinehurst, he got me here, and I hope there's more of those to come because it's great for the game."

DeChambeau, ranked 24th, won LIV Golf titles in Singapore and South Africa last month and likes speed at Augusta.

"If it's firm and fast, the greens are going to be even more difficult to hit than they already are," DeChambeau said. "I feel really good. It's just about going out and executing."

Nitesh takes silver; Sachin, Prince bag bronze

BENGALURU, DHNS: Indian Greco Roman wrestlers added a silver and two bronze medals to the country's tally at the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Wednesday with Nitesh bagging the silver medal in the 97kg category while Sachin Sahrawat (67kg GR) and Prince (82kg) clinching the bronze medals.

The three medals on Wednesday took India's overall medals tally to two silver and three bronze medals on the third day of competition with two women wrestlers securing a spot in the bronze medal play-offs.

All eyes of the Indian contingent on Wednesday were on Nitesh, who had already improved on his last edition's showing by reaching the final of the 97kg category.

The 23-year-old was up against Mohammadhadi Saravi and could not weave the same magic that saw him reach the finals.

Rafa, Prabhav smash centuries to power Max Muller in Tiger Cup

BENGALURU, DHNS: Rafa Poonacha and Prabhav Pydah slammed centuries to power Max Muller to a massive 235-run win over CCE in the Tiger Cup under-16 tournament at the JSS Academy for Technical Education here on Wednesday.

LOCAL CRICKET

Poonacha cracked 119 while Pydah scored 100 as Max Muller posted a huge 348/2 in 29 overs with Athreya Bhat also contributing a 63.

CCE barely offered a stomach for a fight in the daunting chase, collapsing to 113 all out in 22.3 overs. Sathvik S Gowda (3/27) and Rajveer (3/27) grabbed three wickets apiece.

Brief scores: Max Muller: 348/2 in 29 overs (Rafa Poonacha 119, Prabhav Pydah 100, Athreya Bhat 63) bt CCE: 113 all out in 22.3 overs (Sathvik S Gowda 3-27, Rajveer 3-27).

Kreeda Kshetra: 325/7 in 30 overs (Tansh Krishna M 86, Viaan Joshi 50, Vikram 42) bt South End: 122 all out in 23.2 overs (Vikram 4-16, Harshith Raja 3-37).

RRCC: 174/6 in 30 overs (Chetas 45, Samarth BK 42) bt Phoenix Rising Stars: 164/7 in 30 overs (Sai 51; Atharv VK 3-29, Siddharth Ram Narayan 2-22).

Presidency: 35 all out in 17 overs (Atharv Karadi 5-3) lt to Play Smart: 36/0 in 2.1 overs.

CWG delegation reviews 2030 Games prep in Gujarat

AHMEDABAD, PTI: A delegation of Commonwealth Sport began its four-day Gujarat visit on Wednesday to review preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games to be held in Ahmedabad city.

The five-member delegation, led by Commonwealth Sport president Donald Rukare, along with officials from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), will be in the state from April 8 to 11, officials said.

Ahmedabad was formally awarded the hosting rights of the 2030 Commonwealth Games during the Commonwealth Sport's general assembly in November last year, paving the way for the multi-sport event's return to the country after two decades.

The delegation began its tour with a courtesy meeting with state Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

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